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Vikings in Aquitaine and their connections, ninth to early eleventh centuries.

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VIKINGS IN AQUITAINE AND THEIR CONNECTIONS, NINTH TO EARLY ELEVENTH CENTURIES

Stephen Lewis

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Preface and acknowledgements

This thesis grew out of my long-standing interest in and research of the history of 'vikings' in Western Europe. This initially started with their activities in northern England, Ireland and Frisia, but then rather inevitably extended to France and more specifically to Aquitaine south of the Loire where I have lived for quite a number of years.

It soon became clear that all the appearances, raids and operations of these Northmen really need to be placed within wider European trajectories or itineraries. This is perhaps rather obvious because Scandinavian raiders, or 'vikings' if one prefers, were almost by definition continually moving 'overseas' from one region of western Europe to another as some raiding opportunities were exhausted or closed down by local defences whilst more appealing ones opened up elsewhere. But strangely, and with some notable exceptions, these links and connections have rarely been studied in any great depth. This is particularly noticeable in the case of Aquitaine. In fact, in recent decades the Scandinavian warbands and fleets operating in Aquitaine at different times over two centuries have hardly been studied at all, and certainly not with any great rigour.

Already being a member of the Centre Michel de Boüard, Centre de recherches archéologiques et historiques anciennes et médiévales (CRAHAM) at the University of Caen Normandy it was in discussions which took place in and after seminars and conferences at Caen with Pierre Bauduin, Luc Bourgeois, Christine Delaplace, Claude Lorren and Alban Gautier when my tentative idea of researching and writing a history of the 'Vikings in Aquitaine' and their wider European connections was raised, and the above-named scholars encouraged me to undertake this within the context of a doctoral thesis at CRAHAM under the supervision of Pierre Bauduin. The present thesis is the result of this work at Caen; a place it should be said where going back more than a century more scholarly work on the Northmen in France has been undertaken than anywhere else, although it needs to be said not a great deal hitherto on Aquitaine.

I would first like to acknowledge and thank my thesis supervisor Pierre Bauduin who as this research developed has always read all my draft chapters in the most minute detail, commented on them and offered many ideas and suggestions, most of which I have taken up. Without Pierre's encouragement I doubt this thesis would have ever been completed. I would also like to thank Martin Aurell and Luc Bourgeois for acting as my *comité de suivi*, their constant support, ideas and encouragement have been invaluable and are much appreciated.

Over the last years I have also had many illuminating discussions and helpful exchanges on specific aspects of this study with numerous eminent scholars throughout Europe, America and elsewhere. In the first place I would like to acknowledge, from before I even commenced this thesis, the constant help, encouragement and guidance of Simon Coupland,[1] Colmán Etchingham and Clare Downham. But over recent years I have also been able to profit from exchanges, advice, discussions and support from a great number of other historians who I would also like to acknowledge and thank. These have included Bernard Bachrach, Julien Bellarbre, Jan Bill, André-Yves Bourgès, Frédéric Boutoulle, Andrew Breeze, Rolf Bremmer, Olivier Bruand, Tim Clarkson, Ann Christys, Roger Collins, Christian Cooijmans, Robert Favreau, Alban Gautier, Michael Gelting, James Graham-Campbell, Alison Finlay, Sébastien Fray, David Griffiths, Kevin Halloran, Nicholas Higham, Benjamin Hudson, Vincent Hunink, Charles Insley, Edward James, Olivier Jeanne-Rose, Judith Jesch, Eamonn Kelly, Simon Keynes, Véronique Lamazou-Duplan, Jacques Le Maho, Simon Lebouteiller, Stéphane Lecouteux, Chris Lewis, Nico Lettinck, Neils Lund, Lucie Malbos, Shane McLeod, Fraser McNair, Rory McTurk, Jens Christian Moesgaard, Janet Nelson, Guilhem Pépin, Jean-Michel Picard, Hélio Pires, Sara Pons-Sanz, Russell Poole, Neil Price, John Quanrud, Ben Raffield, David Rollason, Elisabeth Ashman Rowe, Christian Settipani, Rudolf Simek, Éric Van Torhoudt, Cécile Treffort, Johanna Maria van Winter, Patrick Wadden, Ann Williams, Gareth Williams and Alex Woolf. For those I have missed I apologise. Needless to say, any remaining errors of fact or interpretation in what follows remain my own. I would also like to thank Jean-Claude Fossey at CRAHAM for kindly producing the maps included in this work.[2]

[1] I would also like to thank Dr Coupland for letting me have and quote from his as yet unpublished English translations of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*, the *Annals of Xanten* and the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*. Similarly, he also kindly let me have and quote from a draft of a yet unpublished book based on his 1987 Cambridge doctoral thesis *Charles the Bald*, I reference this as *Unpublished book*.

[2] The basis for some of these maps was originally generated by J.-C. Fossey of CRAHAM for Pierre Bauduin's 2019 book *Histoire des vikings. Des invasions à la diaspora* (Paris, 2019), but they have been much extended and changed since. I thank Pierre for letting us use some of his original data.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: AIMS, HISTORIOGRAPHY, METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

The history of 'vikings' in Aquitaine encompasses, on and off, more than two centuries, from their first attested appearance and attacks on some 'islands off Aquitaine' in 799 until the early eleventh century.[1] It is a subject that historians have only touched upon sporadically and generally in a very piecemeal fashion and it has never hitherto been studied in any real depth. The first aim of this thesis is to try to fill this yawning historiographical gap, hence to bring together and interpret every piece of historical evidence bearing on the subject, of which there is an enormous amount but which has never been assessed in its totality.

But it is necessary to go further because the Scandinavian groups and warbands involved in Aquitaine over this two-hundred-year-long period need to be situated and studied in their wider European context. This is the second objective of this study; it is a subject that has never really been explored at all.

A little historiography

Going back more than a century and a half there is a voluminous historiographical literature concerning Scandinavian raids and settlement in western Europe, from the first appearance of these vikings at the end of the eighth century until what we might perhaps refer to as the last invasion and attempted conquest of England by Harald Hardrada in 1066. It was of course Harald's ultimately unsuccessful attempt to wrest England from Harold Godwinson and his death at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in late September 1066 that so depleted Harold Godwinson's forces that when he rather too quickly rushed back south to confront William the Bastard's recently arrived Normans he himself was killed along with most of his army at Hastings, and England became a subjugated and exploited country under occupation by the Normans for centuries to come - the leaders of whom were themselves descendants of Scandinavian raiders.

[1] I prefer not to capitalise the word vikings as is still often done in much Anglophone historiography, unless in some way I am directly or indirectly referring to or citing such works. Also, in general (though not exclusively) I prefer to use Northmen or even Scandinavians.

One deficiency with much of this historiography, and particularly at it appertains to the ninth and tenth centuries, is that with some notable exceptions much of it has been written in a national or regional context. Thus, we find many fine studies telling us of 'Vikings in England', 'Vikings in Ireland', 'Vikings in the Low Countries', 'Vikings in France', 'Vikings in Spain' and so on. There are also innumerable studies from many different countries exploring and providing narratives of specific periods and regions using much of the available contemporary or near contemporary historical evidence, sometimes coupled with archaeological findings and numismatic evidence. Yet in the vast bulk of cases, and there are certainly exceptions, little attention is given to the connections of these various Northmen: their international links and their movements. We need to ask questions of where particular Northmen had come from and where they went to afterwards. In what way did their appearances and activities form part of larger pan-European itineraries or trajectories? All too often in this extensive historiography the Scandinavian groups involved are presented as random warbands that turn up in a particular area or region from somewhere completely unknown, do some raiding, fight a few fights, and then disappear again into an unknown and unknowable ether. Yet all these disparate groups were linked or connected, they continually moved from one area of western Europe to another as some raiding opportunities were exhausted or closed down by local defences while more appealing ones opened up elsewhere.

Quite often historians have highlighted the need to study these connections. Just for example regarding England, Simon Keynes says: 'The question always arises whether a particular raid recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* originated in Scandinavia, or whether it originated among the Vikings established on the Continent or among those based in Ireland; for one has to bear in mind that the activities of the Vikings in Ireland, in England, and on the Continent, were complementary aspects of a single phenomenon, and that one raid might have been part of a larger pattern.' Keynes then adds: 'It follows that we cannot begin to understand the course and the conduct of the raids in England without continual reference to continental and Irish annals (notably the so-called *Annals of St-Bertin*, the *Annals of St-Vaast*, and the *Annals of Ulster*).'[1] According to Simon Coupland: 'Viking armies were continually changing in their composition, leadership and location. New elements arrived as old elements left, and the theatre of operations could change from year to year.'[2] Lucien Musset also once wrote: 'On entrevoit

[1] S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England, c. 790-1016', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford 1997), pp. 48-82, at p. 51.
[2] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 2: c.700 - c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 190-201, at p. 195.

la nécessité de mener la recherche en confrontant sans cesse faits anglais et faits normands.'[1] Neil Price says, 'because we tend to view the period through the written record of the Vikings' victims [...] it is easy to overlook the fact that different "army" names are sometimes alternative labels for the same force operating in different places'.[2] One could add many more such pertinent observations although it has to be said that in general these historians, and many others, rarely go on to do what they proposed was necessary.[3]

The tendency to write such histories in a national or regional context is nowadays much less prevalent for the British Isles - by which I include England, Scotland and the Westernn Isles, Wales and Ireland - than it used to be. For example, the chieftain Inwaere/Iguuare (or *Inguar*) operating for a while in England in the late 860s is now almost invariably equated with the Imhar/Ímar who had arrived in Ireland by 857, leading to the now very prevalent hypothesis of a cross-Irish Sea 'dynasty of Ívarr', starting from the mid-ninth century but extending to the mid-tenth century and even beyond, as proposed by Alfred Smyth and then David Dumville, Clare Downham and others,[4] although this ninth-century equation has been recently once again challenged by Colmán Etchingham.[5] Also following the expulsion of the Northmen from Dublin in 902 (or at least of their elite) their subsequent activities in Scotland, in western Northumbria/Cheshire and the Isle of Man as well as on the Loire have sometimes been examined, culminating in some of them returning from Brittany to southwest England and then via south Wales to Ireland, and then some of them subsequently moving on to Northumbria, fighting in a battle at Corbridge in 918 and capturing York in 919.[6]

Other connections across the English Channel have also often been highlighted but rarely examined in any depth. These include the so-called Fulham Northmen who arrived in England in 878 and who combined with other Northmen already in England before moving on to

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[1] L. Musset, 'Pour l'étude comparative de deux fondations politiques des Vikings : le royaume d'York et le duché de Rouen', *Northern History*, 10. 1 (1975), pp. 40-54, at p. 53.

[2] N. S. Price, 'Ship-Men and Slaughter-Wolves. Pirate Politics in the Viking Age', in S. E. Amirel and L. Müller (eds.), *Persistent Piracy: Maritime Violence and State-Formation in Global Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2014), pp. 51-68, at p. 58.

[3] The exception to this is perhaps Lucien Musset but his concentration was on the tenth century.

[4] A. P. Smyth, 'The *Black* Foreigners of York and the *White* Foreigners of Dublin', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society of Northern Research*, 19 (1974-1977), pp. 101-17; *idem*, *Scandinavian Kings in the British Isles 850-880* (Oxford, 1977); *idem*, *Scandinavian York and Dublin. The History and Archaeology of Two Related Viking Kingdoms* (Dublin 1987); D. N. Dumville, 'Old Dubliners and New Dubliners in Ireland and Britain: A Viking-Age story', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin*, 6 (2005), pp. 78-93; C. Downham, *Viking Kings of Britain and Ireland. The Dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014* (Edinburgh, 2007). This equation actually goes back to Charles Halliday in the mid-nineteenth century.

[5] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings: Irish Annals and the Dynamics and Politics of Church Raiding, 794-1014*, forthcoming, chap. 8.4. The idea that 'Inguar' in England and Imhar/Ímar in Ireland were different people had a very long prehistory before Smyth's hypothesis won the day, which it would be out of place to examine more here.

[6] This whole nexus, particularly as it relates to France, is examined in Chapter 11.

Flanders in 879 where they formed a part of the so-called 'great army' which operated in northern France and even Lotharingia for the next thirteen years until some of them came back to England in 892.[1] But where had these Fulham Northmen come from when they arrived in England in 878? Nobody has ever thought to ask this question. I would suggest they probably came from northern France,[2] but before that either from Denmark or, perhaps less likely, from Aquitaine.[3] Also, we know from both English and Continental sources that in 851 a large Scandinavian fleet arrived in south-eastern England from Frisia, fought the English and then left. That they then moved on to Ireland and were called the Dark or Black Foreigners in Irish annals was proposed by Alex Woolf, an opinion I share.[4] We might also mention the composition of the so-called composite 'great heathen army' in England whose first components arrived in 865. This army had both Frisian and Danish connections as well as the supposed 'Ívarr' connection with Ireland which Shane McLeod has recently explored with great thoroughness and insight in his work *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England: The Viking 'Great Army' and Early Settlers, c. 865-900*, which is an important recent evolution in the historiography of Scandinavian migrations and settlement.[5]

There is also the case of the chieftain Weland who was both a freelance viking pirate and a mercenary for Charles the Bald, and who operated on the Somme from 859 then briefly in England and subsequently on the Seine before meeting his death at Nevers on the Loire in a duel with a fellow Northman in late 863.[6]

In terms of Northmen operating in Frisia/the Low Countries there is a huge historiography: historical, archaeological and numismatic.[7] On the historical side, ninth-century Frankish annals tell us much about the activities of essentially Danish Northmen in Frisia and their

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[1] For the Fulham vikings see in the first instance J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Fulham 878-79: A New Consideration of Viking Manoeuvres', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 8 (2012), pp. 23-52. For the next thirteen years in northern Francia see to start with W. Vogel, *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich, bis zur Gründung der Normandie (799-911)* (Heidelberg, 1906), pp. 262-64; S. MacLean, 'Charles the Fat and the Viking Great Army: The Military Explanation for the End of the Carolingian Empire', *War Studies Journal*, 3. 2 (1998), pp. 74-95.

[2] For the history of the incursion into the Seine area in 876-877 and the tribute raised to get them to leave see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 251-55; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald and the defence of the West Frankish Kingdom against the Viking invasions, 840-877*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Cambridge, 1987), pp. 151-56; E. Joransen, *The Danegeld in France* (Rock Island, Ill, 1923), pp. 93-110. F. Lot, 'Les tributs aux Normands et l'Église de France au IXe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 85 (1924), pp. 58-78.

[3] This is an issue I intend to examine in a future article.

[4] A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba 789-1070* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 71-72; S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba. In search of a Frisian-Danish Viking', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 40 (2016), pp. 5-42, at pp. 7-8, 23-24.

[5] See S. McLeod, *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England: The Viking 'Great Army' and Early Settlers, c. 865-900* (Turnhout, 2014).

[6] For a full discussion of Weland's fascinating career and end see Chapters 5 and 6.

[7] Frisia at this time included much of the present-day Netherlands.

relationships and connections with Denmark itself,[1] and with both the West and East Frankish kingdoms and have therefore been studied extensively.[2] However the Northmen operating in Frisia in the early tenth century have received little attention.[3]

Turning now to Brittany, the vikings in Brittany have been the subject of many works over the years even going back to Pierre Le Baud in the late fifteenth century and then to Arthur de La Borderie in the nineteenth century.[4] In more recent times the most prolific contributor has been Jean-Christophe Cassard.[5] There have also been many useful contributions to the subject by Hubert Guillotel, Joëlle Quaghebeur, Neil Price, Éric Van Torhoudt, Élisabeth Ridel, Fraser McNair and Jean Renaud,[6] plus, though less in regard to vikings, some works of Jean-Pierre

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[1] Or at least that part of Denmark closest to the Frankish realm.

[2] See for example and in no particular order: V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation: Dänemark und das Frankenreich im 9. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2011); S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden. Über die Schwierigkeit der Interpretation von frühmittelalterlichen Quellen zur Geschichte Dänemarks*, unpublished M. Phil thesis (University of Vienna, 2008); J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen bij de Zee* (Haarlem, 1923); W. C. Braat, 'Les Vikings au Pays de Frise', *Annales de Normandie*, 4. 3 (1954), pp. 219-27; D. P. Blok, 'De Wikingen in Friesland', *Naamkunde*, 10 (1978), pp. 25-47; S. Lebecq, 'Les Vikings en Frise : Chronique d'un échec relatif', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), pp. 97-112, reprinted in S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 1, *Peuples, cultures, territoires* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011), pp. 151-66; L. van der Tuuk, *Vikingen - Noormannen in de Lage Landen* (Utrecht, 2015); S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers: Scandinavian warlords and Carolingian kings', *Early Medieval Europe*, 7. 1 (1998), pp. 85-114; *idem*, *Charles the Bald*; A. d'Haenens, *Les invasions Normandes en Belgique au IXe siècle. Le phénomène et sa répercussion dans l'historiographie médiévale* (Louvain, 1967); W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*; N. IJssennagger, 'Between Frankish and Viking: Frisia and Frisians in the Viking Age', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 9 (2013), pp. 69-98; J. Hines and N. IJssennagger, *Frisians and their North Sea Neighbours: From the Fifth Century to the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2017); S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba. In search of a Frisian-Danish Viking'; R. Simek and U. Engel (eds.), *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent research on early medieval relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia* (Vienna, 2004); P. Bauduin, 'Harald Klak : un modèle d'intégration à l'épreuve ?', in *Journée d'études 'Les élites aux frontières', Université de Marne-la-Vallée*, May 2006, which is available online at https://lamop.univ-paris1.fr/fileadmin/lamop/publications/Elites-Frontieres/Frontieres_Harald_Klak_Bauduin_2006.pdf; *idem*, *Le monde franc et les vikings VIII* e*-X* e *siècle* (Paris, 2009).

[3] We will touch on these Northmen briefly in Chapter 11 where the various sources and differing interpretations are presented.

[4] See P. Le Baud, *Compillation des Cronicques et ystoires des Bretons* (1480); K. Abélard, ed. *Edition scientifique des Chroniques des rois, ducs et princes de Bretagne de Pierre Le Baud, d'après le manuscrit 941 conservé à la Bibliothèque municipale d'Angers* (Angers, 2015), available online at https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01478312; P. Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne, avec les chroniques des maisons de Vitré et de Laval*, ed. D'Hozier (Paris, 1638); A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne, Plihon, Honnay et Vatar*, 6 vols (Rennes, 1896-1914). See also R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne* (1924), pp. 26-40; H. Prentout, 'Les limites de la Bretagne et de la Normandie au Xe siècle. La bataille de Caen (931)', *Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive* (1912), pp. 268-73, both rather peculiar works.

[5] See for example J.-C. Cassard, 'Les Vikings à Nantes', in A. Croix (ed.), *Nantes dans l'histoire de France* (Nantes, 1991), pp. 31-40; *idem*, 'En marge des incursions vikings', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 98. 3 (1991), pp. 261-72; *idem*, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne* (Paris, 1996); *idem*, 'En marge des incursions vikings. Le périple terrestre des moines de Landévennec', and 'La Vie de saint Gildas par Vital de Rhuys', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Finistère*, 127 (1998), pp. 258-62; *idem*, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, 2nd edn (Rennes, 2002); *idem*, 'Avant les Normands, les Vikings en Bretagne', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 97-107.

[6] See A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois Ve-Xe siècle* (Rennes, 1984); H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle du pouvoir ducal breton (936-1040)', *Actes du 103e Congrès national des sociétés savantes (Nancy-Metz 1978)* (Paris, 1979), pp. 63-84; *idem*, 'L'exode du clergé breton devant les invasions

Brunterc'h and Noël-Yves Tonnerrre,[1] although particularly in regard to 'connections' a couple of these works are rather misleading and this thesis will examine a few such cases in later chapters, especially as they relate to Aquitaine.

Finally, before turning to the Frankish realm and then to Aquitaine, in terms of Iberia and the Mediterranean the first two Scandinavian expeditions there took place in 844-845 and 858-861 and they are reasonably well known from several Frankish and Muslim sources. So too are later incursions in the late 960s to early 970s, and more opaquely in the early eleventh century.[2]

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scandinaves', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 59 (1982), pp. 269-315; J. Quaghebeur, 'Alain Barbe-Torte ou le retour improbable d'un prince en sa terre', *Bulletin de l'Association Bretonne*, 112 (2003), pp. 143-68; *eadem*, 'Les Vikings à l'assaut de l'Europe', *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie et d'histoire du pays de Lorient*, 33 (2004-2005), pp. 103-108; *eadem*, 'Norvège et Bretagne aux IXe et Xe siècles : un destin partagé', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves* (2005), pp. 113-31; N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, *The Viking Society for Northern Research* (London, 1989); *idem*, 'Viking Brittany: Revisiting the Colony that Failed', in A. Reynolds and L. E. Webster (eds.), *Early medieval art and archaeology in the northern world: studies in honour of James Graham-Campbell* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 731-42; É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité en Neustrie et dans le duché de Normandie. Maîtrise du territoire et pouvoirs locaux dans l'Avranchin, le Bessin et le Cotentin (VIe-XIe siècles)*, unpublished doctoral thesis, 3 vols (University of Paris 7, 2008); *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne à l'expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954): une marche de Normandie?', in J. Quaghebeur and S. Soleil (eds.), *Le pouvoir et la foi au Moyen Âge, en Bretagne et dans l'Europe de l'Ouest, Mélanges à la mémoire du professeur Hubert Guillotel* (Rennes, 2010), pp. 601-17; *idem*, 'Les Bretons dans les diocèses de Coutances et d'Avranches (950-1200 environ) : une approche onomastique de la question de l'identité', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy, 5-9 octobre 2005* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 113-44; É. Ridel, 'Les Vikings en Bretagne et la Chanson d'Aiquin : réalités et imaginaires', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc : impact, héritage, imaginaire* (Bayeux, 2014), pp. 109-18; *eadem*, 'Sur la route des Vikings : les îles Anglo-Normandes entre Bretagne et Normandie', in M. Coumert and Y. Tranvouez (eds.), *Landévennec, les Vikings et la Bretagne. En hommage à Jean-Christophe Cassard* (Brest, 2015), pp. 127-55; F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons? The Language of Factional Politics in Late Carolingian Brittany', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 11 (2015), pp. 183-202; J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et les Celtes* (Rennes, 1992).

[1] For example J.-P. Brunterc'h, *L'extension du ressort politique et religieux du Nantais au sud de la Loire : essai sur les origines de la dislocation du 'pagus' d'Herbauge (IXe siècle-987)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Paris-Sorbonne, 1981); *idem*, 'Puissance temporelle et pouvoir diocésain des évêques de Nantes entre 936 et 1049', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 61 (1984), pp. 29-82; *idem*, 'Le duché du Maine et la marche de Bretagne', in H. Atsma (ed.), *La Neustrie - Les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850*, *Beihefte der Francia*, 16. 1 (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 29-127; N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne. Géographie historique et structures sociales de la Bretagne méridionale (Nantais et Vannetais) de la fin du VIIIe siècle à la fin du XIIe siècle* (Angers, 1994).

[2] There has been an enormous literature on vikings in Iberia and the Mediterranean in the ninth, tenth and even early eleventh centuries. It is of very variable quality. Here are just a few of these works, many of which we will return to in later chapters as they relate to Aquitaine: A. Christys, 'The Vikings in the south through Arab eyes', in W. Pohl, C. Gantner, and R. Payne (eds.), *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World. The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300-1100* (Farnham/Burlington, 2012), pp. 447-57; *eadem*, *Vikings in the South: Voyages to Iberia and the Mediterranean* (London, 2015); A. Melvinger, *Les premières incursions des Vikings en Occident d'après les sources arabes* (Uppsala, 1955); J. Stefánsson, 'The Vikings in Spain. From Arabic (Moorish) and Spanish Sources', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 6 (1908-1909), pp. 31-46. R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', in *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne pendant le moyen age*, vol. II (Leiden, 1860), pp. 271-390; *idem*, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne : jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides (711-1110)*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 1861); H. Pires, 'Money for Freedom, Ransom Paying to Vikings in Western Iberia', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 7 (2011), pp. 125-30; *idem*, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147): Fontes, História e Vestígios*, unpublished doctoral thesis (New University of Lisbon, 2012); *idem*, 'Viking Attacks in Western Iberia: An Overview', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 9 (2013), pp. 155-72; *idem*, *Vikings em Portugal e na Galiza: As incursões nórdicas medievais no ocidente ibérico* (Sintra, 2017); *idem*, 'Nem Tui, nem Gibraltar: Óláfr Haraldsson e a Península Ibérica', *España Medieval*, 38 (2015), pp. 313-28; J. S. Izquierdo Díaz, *Os Vikingos en Galicia* (Santiago de Compostella, 2009);

The ninth-century expeditions or raids are usually examined by Iberian historians, even quite recent ones, in isolation, although that they originated in France and more specifically in Aquitaine and returned there is generally acknowledged and highlighted, for obvious geographical reasons. Both of these expeditions are touched on later in this thesis particularly regarding their 'French' origin and ultimate return to France. The raids in Iberia in the second half of the tenth century and in the second decade of the eleventh century are also usually examined in isolation, but these too clearly had connections with France, Aquitaine, and even with England, which have rarely been explored but which are examined in Chapters 15 and 16.

Turning now to France itself, or perhaps better said to the West Frankish realm, in terms of 'connections' the historiographical situation is probably worse than for the British Isles or in respect of Frisia. With some notable exceptions most histories of the 'Vikings in France' have concentrated on the northern Frankish realm (Neustria and Francia), and sometimes of course on Brittany. But at least with regard to earlier generations of historians when any wider connections or itineraries of the Northmen involved are mentioned at all they often have a tendency to simply accept at face value many much later Icelandic/Norwegian histories and sagas, most particularly those concerning the legendary Ragnar Lothbrok (ON Ragnarr Loðbrók) and his litany of supposed or invented sons, plus even the story told in the late so-called *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* regarding a chieftain called Ragnall (ON Rögnvaldr), who is sometimes quite erroneously identified with the historical *Reginheri* (Ragnar) who attacked Paris in 845, and the trip of two of Ragnall's sons from the Orkneys to Iberia via England and France, which is often again wrongly equated with the second expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean in 858-861.[1] Furthermore, despite the insightful and thorough, though

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E. Morales Romero, *Os viquingos en Galicia* (Santiago, 1997); *idem*, *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la Peninsula Ibérica en los los siglos IX-XI*, 2nd edn (Madrid, 2006); V. Almazán, *Gallaecia scandinavica: introducción ó estudio das relacións galaico-escandinavas durante a Idade Media* (Vigo, 1986); *idem*, *San Olav, rey perpetuo de Noruega* (Santiago de Compostella, 2000); *idem*, 'Los Vikingos en Galicia', in *Los vikingos en la Península Ibérica*, Fundación Reina Isabel de Dinamarca (Madrid, 2004); M. J. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim* (Porto, 2018); A. K. Fabricius, *Forbindelserne mellem Norden og den Spanske Halvø i ældre Tider* (Copenhagen, 1882); *idem*, *Connaissance de la péninsule espagnole par les hommes du Nord, Mémoire destiné à la 10eme session du congrès international des orientalistes* (Lisbon, 1892); N. S. Price, 'The Vikings in Spain, North Africa and the Mediterranean', in S. Brink and N. Price (eds.), *The Viking World* (London, 2008), pp. 462-69; S. M. Pons-Sanz, 'The Basque country and the Vikings during the ninth century', *Journal of the Society of Basque Studies of America*, 21 (2001), pp. 48-58; *eadem*, 'Whom did al-Ghazal meet? An exchange of embassies between the Arabs from al-Andalus and the Vikings', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 28 (2004), pp. 5-28; C. Mazzoli-Guintard, 'Les Normands dans le Sud de la péninsule Ibérique au milieu du IXe siècle : aspects du peuplement d'al-Andalus', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 103. 2 (1996), pp. 27-37; V. E. Aguirre, *The Viking expeditions to Spain during the 9th century*, *Mindre Skrifter*, 30 (Odense, 2013).

[1] Some of these earlier histories include G.-B. Depping, *Histoire des expéditions maritimes des Normands et de leur établissement en France au dixième siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1826); J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, 2 vols (Copenhagen, 1876); *idem*, 'Études préliminaires pour servir à l'histoire des Normands et de leurs invasions, avec

one could say only partial, debunking by the Caen historian Henri Prentout of Dudo of Saint-Quentin's early eleventh-century stories, or fables as some earlier historians have called them, in his *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum* of the doings of the very composite chieftain Alsting (Hasting) and the supposed early activities of a young Rollo, the founder of Normandy,[1] some historians have in more recent times tried to resurrect or rehabilitate Dudo's credibility regarding precise historical events, an effort I deem most worthy but ultimately unsuccessful as will be explored on certain occasions later in the present work.[2] But whereas at least in the case of Rollo there has been a long-running debate regarding Rollo's origin - was he from Norway or Denmark - without any consensus having ever been reached except for the general view that he had spent some time in England or Britain before arriving on the Seine - the many real links or connections between Northmen operating in Neustria/Francia/Brittany and in Aquitaine in the ninth, tenth and early eleventh centuries have received little detailed attention; a number of these are examined for the first time in the present work.

In terms of what we might call the 'history and chronology of events', in my opinion to this day the best single work on the Northmen's activities in the West Frankish realm is Walther Vogel's 1906 book *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich, bis zur Gründung der Normandie (799-911)*. For most later Germanic and Anglophone historians, and even some Francophone historians, Vogel's quite magisterial study remains the basic reference work and his views are very often cited, sometimes even without any criticism, as though that were the end of the story. But as will be mentioned on many occasions later in this thesis there are a number of points where we can and should take issue with Vogel regarding his interpretations, particularly when he (like others) blithely drags in Ragnar Lothbrok and his sons regarding the Northmen's

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une introduction de E. de Beaurepaire', *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de Normandie*, 10 (1882), pp. 185-418; *idem*, *Les invasions normandes en France : Etude critique* (Paris, 1969); G. Storm, *Kritiske Bidrag til Vikingetidens Historie: (I. Ragnar Lodbrok og Gange-Rolf)* (Kristiania, 1878); H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1 (Oslo, 1940); C. F. Keary, *The Vikings in Western Christendom, A D. 789 to A D. 888* (London, 1891), but many subsequent works still follow the same line, as too on occasion did Walther Vogel and Alfred P. Smyth.

[1] See H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin et son histoire des premiers ducs normands* (Paris, 1916). In my opinion Prentout's usually excellent 'critical faculty' rather deserted him for the tenth century.

[2] It is worth highlighting here that the study of Dudo's work has subsequently taken a different path to that of Prentout. Whilst many historians have rightly seen Dudo's stories as unhistorical and even as 'fables', (and I include here Arthur de La Borderie, Lucien Musset, David Bates and Eric Christiansen, among others), more recent scholarship, while still acknowledging Dudo's complete unreliability regarding historical facts and events, has concentrated on his work as a panegyrist and emphasises that he can still provide us with much interesting historical information, although it has to be said mostly about his own time. There have been many studies tending in this direction (some of which are referenced in the bibliography), including quite recently B. Pohl, *Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Historia Normannorum. Tradition, Innovation and Memory* (Woodbridge and Rochester, 2015). This should be borne in mind in subsequent chapters of this thesis where Dudo's work is being discussed and critiqued.

activities in Aquitaine and elsewhere. Yet for the ninth century and until 911, when his study ends, Vogel's book remains required reading for any examination of this period in West Francia. One simply cannot ignore Vogel's work if one wants to begin to understand the history of the Northmen in the West Frankish realm.

The other major early scholar of the Northmen in France, but again mostly concerning the ninth century, is the great French historian Ferdinand Lot.[1] In the years around the turn of the twentieth century Lot was researching and writing a history of the Northmen's incursions in France. But as Lot himself says, after having read Walther Vogel's work he decided to abandon this work because Vogel had so thoroughly covered the ground.[2] This is a truly stunning though admirable admission from a French historian regarding the work of a German historian on French matters. Nevertheless, Lot did go on to publish some parts of his study in articles where he sometimes took issue with Vogel. In addition, much after his death some of his draft chapters on these incursions were published in the three volumes of his *Recueil des Travaux Historiques*, mostly in volume two.[3] These chapters and many other relevant and insightful works by Lot are frequently referenced and engaged with in this thesis and all his relevant works can be found in the bibliography. Lot's views do, however, still provide the basis for much subsequent French historiography on the Scandinavians in France, both on the Seine, along the Loire and in Aquitaine.

Of course, there have been some excellent works on the vikings in France in general over the course of the twentieth century and into this century. I would just mention here those of Lucien Musset,[4] Albert d'Haenens,[5] Janet Nelson,[6] Stéphane Lebecq,[7] Simon Coupland,[8] Pierre

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[1] See in particular F. Lot, *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, 3 vols (Geneva and Paris, 1968-1973).

[2] F. Lot, 'La Grande invasion normande de 856-862', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 69 (1908), pp. 5-62, at p. 5, n. 2. He says here that Vogel's work had rendered the achievement of his own work on 'les invasions scandinaves en France … inutile'.

[3] See the reference above.

[4] For example L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)* (Paris, 1965).

[5] Cf. A. d'Haenens, *Les invasions Normandes en Belgique au IXe siècle*; *idem*, 'Les invasions normandes dans l'Empire franc au IXe siècle. Pour une rénovation de la problématique', *I Normanni e la loro espansione in Europa nell'altomedio evo, Settimane di Studio del Centra Italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo*, 16 (Spolète, 1969), pp. 233-98; *idem*, *Les invasions normandes, une catastrophe ?* (Paris, 1970).

[6] See J. L. Nelson, 'The Frankish Empire', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 19-47, but also many of her other works referenced in the bibliography and later in this thesis.

[7] For example S. Lebecq, 'Les Vikings en Frise : Chronique d'un échec relatif', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), pp. 97-112.

[8] Including, but not at all limited to, S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*; *idem*, 'The rod of God's wrath or the people of God's wrath? The Carolingians' theology of the Viking invasions', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 42 (1991), pp. 535-54; *idem*, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald', *Journal of Medieval History*, 17. 1 (1991), pp. 1-12; *idem*, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History Volume. 2: c.700–c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 190-201; *idem*, 'The Frankish tribute payments

Bauduin,[1] and, most recently, Christian Cooijmans.[2] But with the exception of Coupland it needs to be said that most of these works concentrate on the Frankish realm north of the Loire and say little about Aquitaine south of the river.

But even though events and connections concerning Scandinavian raids in northern France and in Brittany would still benefit from a little more exploration than has hitherto been given, the situation regarding their raids and activities in Aquitaine is from a historiographical perspective more dire. Aquitaine is defined here, and very generally, as the lands lying to the south and west of the Loire extending to the Pyrenees and obviously includes Gascony south of the Garonne. This vast area is a veritable black hole in the historiographical tradition of the vikings.

Aquitaine

The political history of Aquitaine in the ninth and tenth centuries has greatly benefitted from the works of scholars such as Léonce Auzias, Philippe Wolff, Archibald Lewis and Jane Martindale,[3] as well as from very numerous fine studies of specific regions within Aquitaine. But all these historians' concerns are primarily with the political history of Aquitaine. The Northmen's activities are generally seen as being important though peripheral. Much as with Ferdinand Lot's contention, new 'bands' of unidentified Northmen suddenly pop up from time to time in various Aquitanian locales 'from where we do not know'.[4] They then fight against or

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to the Vikings and their consequences', *Francia*, 26. 1 (1999), pp. 57-75; *idem*, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', *History*, 88 (2003), pp. 187-203; *idem*, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', *Viator*, 35 (2004), pp. 49-70; *idem*, 'Raiders, traders, worshippers and settlers: the Continental perspective', in J. Graham-Campbell, S. M. Sindbæk, and G. Williams (eds.), *Silver Economies, Monetisation and Society in Scandinavia, AD 800-1100* (Aarhus, 2011), pp. 113-31; *idem*, 'Holy Ground? The Plundering and Burning of Churches by Vikings and Franks in the Ninth Century', *Viator*, 45. 1 (2014), pp. 73-97.

[1] For example, P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*; *idem*, *Histoire des vikings*.

[2] C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs: The Conceptual Development of Viking Activity Across the Frankish Realm (c. 750–940)* (London and New York, 2020).

[3] L. Auzias, 'Recherches d'histoire carolingienne. I. Les fluctuations politiques de quelques grands d'Aquitaine au temps de Charles le Chauve (846-874)', *Annales du Midi*, 44. 176 (1932), pp. 385-416 ; *idem*, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne (778 - 987)* (Toulouse and Paris, 1937); P. Wolff, 'L'Aquitaine et ses marges', in H. Beumann (ed.), *Karl der Große : Lebenswerk und Nachleben I. Persönlichkeit und Geschichte* (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 269-306; A. R. Lewis, *The development of southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, TX, 1965); J. Martindale, 'The Kingdom of Aquitaine and the "Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc"', *Francia*, 11 (1984), pp. 131-91; *eadem*, 'Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* (Aldershot, 1990), pp. 115-38; *eadem*, 'Peace and war in eleventh-century Aquitaine', in C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey (eds.), *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood IV: Papers from the fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 147-76; *eadem*, *Status, Authority and Regional Power: Aquitaine and France, 9th to 12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997).

[4] For example, F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine de 862 à 866. Robert le Fort', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 76 (1915), pp. 473-510, at p. 482, n. 2.

for Frankish kings or nobles before disappearing again into some unknown or unknowable maritime ether.

In regard to Northmen in Poitou in northern Aquitaine, Marcel Garaud wrote an article in 1937 entitled 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences'.[1] In this article Garaud provides an excellent and easily accessible introduction to the subject but nothing greatly innovative because it is mostly based on the ideas of earlier historians such as Alfred Richard and Ferdinand Lot. We also have the very interesting works of Émile Mabille as corrected by Pierre Gasnault[2] which examine the activities of Northmen along the Loire in the ninth century until the attack on Tours in 903. The Caen-based linguistic scholar of the 'vikings' Jean Renaud also wrote some short popular works about the Northmen in Aquitaine which, however, do not really provide any original insights.[3] In terms of Gascony, in recent decades the only scholarly work which purports to provide a full narrative is Renée Mussot-Goulard's 1982 *Les princes de Gascogne*,[4] coupled with some of her later studies.[5] However, this book is a most flawed work in terms of the *Normands* and it will be analysed and critiqued in some detail in Chapters 8 and 15. The Bordeaux scholar Frédéric Boutoulle also wrote an article on 'les Vikings à Bordeaux'.[6]

Yet none of the works mentioned above, even when combined together and coupled with the works of Vogel, Lot and others, offer anything near to a comprehensive analysis of Scandinavian activities in Aquitaine over two centuries, and much less of their many links with the rest of western Europe. It is this gap that the present thesis attempts at least partially to fill.

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[1] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences', *Revue Historique,* 180 (1937), pp. 241-67. See also M. Garaud, 'Les origines des « pagi » poitevins du Moyen Âge (VI e -XI e siècles)', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4. 27 (1949), pp. 543-61. Although not at all specifically about the *Normands*, Alfred Richard's *Histoire des comtes de Poitou (778-1204)* (Paris, 1903) is still most insightful, whilst André Debord's *La société laïque dans les pays de la Charente Xe-XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1984) whilst being a great study of the region adds little of any note for our concerns here and it is often just wrong when it comes to vikings.

[2] É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de saint Martin [premier article]' and 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de saint Martin [second article]', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 30 (1869), pp. 149-94 and pp. 425-60; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes dans l'histoire et dans la légende', *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France*, 47. 144 (1961), pp. 51-66.

[3] See for example J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine* (Pau, 2003); *idem*, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings* (Verrières, 2008).

[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne 768-1070* (Marsolan, 1982).

[5] This work of Mussot-Goulard has given rise to a whole literature on the vikings in Aquitaine (or more exactly in Gascony) which is, however, not grounded in any 'données scientifiques' (P. Bauduin's term). One could mention here the many works of Joël Supéry which are touched on occasionally later in this thesis, but for a refutation of which see A. Gautier, 'Une principauté viking en Gascogne? À propos d'une imposture', *Annales de Normandie*, 1 (2018), pp. 173-85.

[6] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands. Les Vikings à Bordeaux et la mémoire de leurs incursions. État des sources', *Revue archéologique de Bordeaux*, 99 (2008), pp. 23-38.

Other ways of considering connections

Since the days of Lot and Vogel, over the last several decades the concept of what we might call 'viking connections' has been developed by historians such as, to name just a few, Lucien Musset, Peter Sawyer, Alfred Smyth and Simon Coupland,[1] although with the exception of Coupland Aquitanian connections rarely feature.[2] Furthermore, the relatively recent concept of a 'Viking Diaspora' introduced by Judith Jesch and elaborated on by historians such as Lesley Abrams, Pierre Bauduin and Alban Gautier has proved to be a most interesting contribution to any understanding of the European links of the Northmen, particularly in the tenth century.[3] This new strand of historiography is not unrelated to the analysis of connections elaborated in this thesis.

In regard to connections across the North Sea, we also have the many recent studies of Stéphane Lebecq, Alban Gautier and Lucie Malbos who have brought together archaeological and historical evidence regarding the ports of the northern seas in viking times.[4]

In recent years some historians and even mathematicians have tried to use *complex network analysis* on archaeological and historical data to illuminate connections, particularly in terms of trade and commerce. We could mention here the case, Søren Sindbæk,[5] who uses Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, and the more mathematical case of Joseph Yose *et al* who examine the *Cogad*

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[1] See for example L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)*; P. H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, 1st edn (London, 1962); *idem*, *Kings and Vikings. Scandinavia and Europe AD 700-1100* (London and New York, 1982); A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian Kings in the British Isles 850-880* (Oxford, 1977); *idem*, *Scandinavian York and Dublin. The History and Archaeology of Two Related Viking Kingdoms* (Dublin 1987); S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*; *idem*, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911'.

[2] But Coupland's 1987 doctoral thesis *Charles the Bald* finishes in 877.

[3] Cf. J. Jesch, 'Myth and Cultural Memory in the Viking Diaspora', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 4 (2008), pp. 221-26; *eadem*, *The Viking Diaspora* (London, 2015); L. J. Abrams, 'Diaspora and identity in the Viking Age', *Early Medieval Europe*, 20. 1 (2012), pp. 17-38; P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, pp. 294-301; *idem*, 'Lectures (dé)coloniales des vikings', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 59. 1 (2016), pp. 1-18; A. Gautier, 'Le phénomène viking' and 'La diaspora viking', in B. Dumézil, S. Joye, and C. Mériaux (eds.), *Confrontation, échanges et connaissance de l'autre au nord et à l'est de l'Europe, de la fin du VIIe siècle au milieu du XIe siècle* (Rennes, 2017), pp. 99-115 and pp. 347-64.

[4] See for example S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, 2 vols (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011); S. Lebecq, and A. Gautier, 'Routeways between England and the Continent in the Tenth Century', in D. Rollason, C. Leyser, and H. Williams (eds.), *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947)* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 17-34; A. Gautier, 'La piraterie dans les mers du Nord au haut Moyen Âge', in G. Buti and P. Hrodej (eds.), *Histoire des corsaires et des pirates, de l'Antiquité à nos jours* (Paris, 2016), pp. 77-90; *idem*, 'Nature et mode d'action des bandes armées vikings : quelques réflexions sur la seconde moitié du IXe siècle', *Revue d'histoire nordique*, 23 (2018), pp. 71-86; *idem*, 'Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs?', in M. J. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim* (Porto, 2018), pp. 27-38. L. Malbos, *Les ports des mers nordiques à l'époque viking (VIIe - Xe siècles)* (Turnhout, 2017); A. Gautier and L. Malbos (eds.), *Communautés maritimes et insulaires du premier Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2020). See also many of the articles in S. Gelichi and R. Hodges, *From One Sea to Another. Trading Places in the European and Mediterranean Early Middle Ages*, *Proceedings of the International Conference, Comacchio, 27th-29th March 2009* (Turnhout, 2012).

[5] S. M. Sindbæk, 'The Small World of the Vikings: Networks in Early Medieval Communication and Exchange', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 40. 1 (2007), pp. 59-74.

Gáedel re Gallaib ('The War of the Irish with the Foreigners') composed at the beginning of the eleventh century.[1] This type of work is a fascinating new approach although such models are usually based on a single text whereas in this thesis we are confronted with a bundle of different texts.

Another way to look at links and connections is from an archaeological perspective. Archaeology can provide data and describe realities other than those found in texts, or elements which are not found in such written sources. When combined with any available textual evidence we can achieve a much more rounded or complete picture. History, archaeology and numismatics need to go hand in hand although this sometimes can run the risk of circular argumentation. Take for example the various winter-camps or ship-bases which have been discovered and excavated in such places as Ireland and England, and even the many silver hoards which have provided so many coins as well as other treasure. These have been most enlightening and have significantly aided our understanding of the Northmen. In England in the ninth century we have the camps at Repton and Torksey which can clearly be related to events involving the 'Great Heathen Army' in the early 870s as told of in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.[2] Similarly, the camp found at Woodstown near present-day Waterford in Ireland has helped us confirm and enlarge textual evidence from various Irish annals as well as providing much other useful data not found in any annals.[3] In present-day France there is one 'viking' ship-burial discovered on the Île de Groix (dep. Morbihan) off the southern coast of Brittany. Although this was perhaps not originally excavated satisfactorily by modern scientific standards it is believed from comparative dating of sword types and stylistic elements that it might be dated to the second half of the tenth century.[4] This serious dating evidence poses the question of a

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[1] J. Yose, R. Kenna, M. MacCarron, and P. MacCarron, 'Network analysis of the Viking Age in Ireland as portrayed in *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh*', *Royal Society Open Science* (2018), available online at royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsos.171024.

[2] Cf. M. Biddle and B. Kjølbye-Biddle, 'Repton and the "great heathen army", 873-4', in J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch, and D. N. Parsons (eds.), *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 45-96; D. Hadley and J. D. Richards, 'Viking Torksey: Inside the Great Army's winter camp', *Current Archaeology*, 281 (2013); *eadem*, 'The Winter Camp of the Viking Great Army, AD 872-3, Torksey', *Antiquaries Journal*, 96 (2016), pp. 23-67; *eadem*, 'In search of the Viking Great Army', *Medieval Settlement Research*, 33 (2018), pp. 1-17; J. D. Richards and D. Haldenby, 'The Scale and Impact of Viking Settlement in Northumbria', *Medieval Archaeology*, 62 (2018), pp. 322-50. See also S. McLeod, *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England*.

[3] Cf. I. Russell and M. F. Hurley (eds.), *Woodstown: a Viking-age settlement in co. Waterford* (Dublin, 2014); E. Kelly, 'The *longphort* in Viking-Age Ireland: the archaeological evidence', in H. B. Clarke and R. Johnson (eds.), *The Vikings in Ireland and Beyond: before and after the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2015), pp. 55-92; E. Kelly and J. Maas, 'Vikings on the Barrow', *Archaeology Ireland*, 9 (1995), pp. 30-32; *idem*, 'The Vikings and the kingdom of Laois', in P. G. Lane and W. Nolan (eds.), *Laois History & Society, Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County* (1999), pp. 123-59.

[4] For which see to start with L. Tarrou, *Corpus du mobilier de type scandinave (IXe-XIe siècles) découvert en France : Bretagne, Normandie et Pays de la Loire*, unpublished Master's thesis (Université de Poitiers, 2000); *eadem*, 'La sépulture à bateau viking de l'île de Groix (Morbihan)', *Les Vikings en France*, *Dossiers*

viking presence in this area which is not attested in extant texts. In Aquitaine proper, from the Loire south, there are a few swords found in the Loire and near Bordeaux[1] and other 'viking' finds on the Charente.[2] In the case of the Charente finds we know of a Scandinavian presence in the area in the mid-ninth century from contemporary or near contemporary texts, but twenty-five of the objects found are generally recognised as being of an 'Anglo-Scandinavian' type, which leads the archaeologists concerned to state: 'Cette concentration est la plus forte à ce jour en France […]. Elle laisse penser que le port de Taillebourg a pu entretenir des relations avec l'axe transmanche, formant ainsi une passerelle entre le val de la Charente et le monde insulaire.'[3] We explore such cross-channel links between Aquitaine (including the valley of the Charente) and the British Isles, including Ireland, in several subsequent chapters.

Similarly, there is the study of place-names and microtoponyms believed to be of Scandinavian origin. Much work has been done on these especially in Normandy and England.[4]

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d'Archéologie, 277 (2000), pp. 72-79; *eadem*, 'La sépulture à bateau de l'île de Groix (Morbihan)', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc* (Bayeux, 2014), pp. 40-41; M. Müller-Wille, 'Das Schiffsgrab von der Ile de Groix (Bretagne). Ein Exkurs zum "Bootkammergrab von Haithabu"', *Ausgrabungen in Haithabu (1963–1980): Das archäologische Fundmaterial der Ausgrabung Haithabu*, Band 3, Bericht 12 (Neumünster, 1978), pp. 48-84. It could be suggested that a dating to earlier in the tenth century is possible.

[1] For which see to start with I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert. Genèse d'un réseau monastique dans la société carolingienne* (Rennes, 2009); G. Durville, 'Les épées normandes de l'île de Bièce', *Bulletin de la société Archéologique et Historique de Nantes et de la Loire-Inférieure*, 68 (1928), pp. 121-46; H. Arbman and N.-O. Nilsson, 'Armes scandinaves de l'époque viking en France', in *Meddelanden Från Lunds Universitets Historika Museum 1966-68* (Lund, 1969), pp. 163-202, at pp. 168-69; M. Müller-Wille, 'Das Schiffsgrab von der Ile de Groix (Bretagne)', pp. 70-79; J. Renou, 'L'épée du fond du fleuve : relecture archéologique d'un artefact dit « viking » conservé au Musée d'Aquitaine de Bordeaux', *Revue archéologique de Bordeaux*, 177, (2016), pp. 39-45; *eadem*, Résumé de mémoire : 'De l'objet de patrimoine à l'objet archéologique: étude des artefacts « vikings » conservés au musée d'Aquitaine de Bordeaux', *Aquitania*, 30 (2014), pp. 379-83. But Luc Bourgeois has pointed out in personal correspondence, 'Attention toutefois aux épées dites *vikings* en France, toutes découvertes hors contexte (sauf Péran) et qui n'ont rien de particulièrement scandinave. D'autre part, les datations deviennent très floues après le début du 10e siècle, puisqu'on ne peut plus se référer aux dépôts funéraires nordiques. La datation du carbone du fer, en cours de test, devrait permettre de sortir bientôt de cette lecture formelle un peu vague'.

[2] Cf. A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, and M. Pichon, 'La Charente à Taillebourg-Port d'Envaux (France, dép. Char.-Mar.). Premiers résultats d'une prospection thématique subaquatique', *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt,* 33 (2003), pp. 585-96; A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, *Archéologie et histoire du fleuve Charente : Taillebourg-Port d'Envaux : une zone portuaire du haut Moyen Age sur le fleuve Charente* (Dijon, 2013); A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, and J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente ? Le témoignage de l'archéologie', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc* (Bayeux, 2014), pp. 42-49. For a very sceptical assessment of any supposed long-lasting 'viking' base at Taillebourg see J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg (Charente-Maritime) : l'histoire complexe d'un grand aménagement médiéval', in *Actes du colloque la rivière aménagée : entre héritages et modernité : formes, techniques et mise en œuvre*, *Aestuaria*, 7 (Orleans, 2005), pp. 151-205; *idem*, 'Aux origines des châteaux et des bourgs castraux dans la moyenne et basse Charente', in A.-M. Flambard-Héricher and J. Le Maho (eds.), *Château, ville et pouvoir au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2012), pp. 81-156. More accepting is J. Clémens, 'Taillebourg, des refuges normands en Aquitaine au IXe siècle', in *Les Landes entre tradition et écologie*, *Actes du XLVIIe Congrès d'études régionales de la Fédération historique du Sud-Ouest tenu à Sabres les 25-26 mars 1995* (Bordeaux, 1996), pp. 337-54.

[3] A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, and J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente ?', p. 47.

[4] A good place to start is perhaps the essays of A. Nissen-Jaubert, G. Fellows-Jensen, Å. K. H. Wagner and É. Ridel in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident et les débuts du duché de Normandie*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (25-29 septembre 2002)* (Caen, 2005), which are also cited in the bibliography of this present work. There have been many interesting studies since including L. J. Abrams, 'Early Normandy', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 35, *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2012* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 45-64; *eadem*, 'Vive la

But one of the abiding difficulties with such studies is that even when we can be sure they are Scandinavian and not just 'Germanic' it cannot usually be established with any certainty when such names became first established; was it in the ninth or tenth centuries, or was it even much later?

Then there is numismatics. The study of coins found in viking hoards and elsewhere can sometimes be very illuminating in terms of connections and in the present study we will examine a couple of fascinating examples, one being the possible relationship between Ireland and the Northmen operating in Aquitaine in the 840s, and another being the Aquitanian provenance of many of the Carolingian coins found in the famous Cuerdale hoard discovered on the river Ribble in Lancashire in north-west England.

Choice of methodology

Whilst fully acknowledging all the above-mentioned excellent contributions and approaches to our understanding of the connectedness of the Northmen's activities and presence in western Europe, in terms of Aquitaine we have to go back to basics because their activities there and their connections with other parts of Europe have, as yet, never been examined and established with any precision.

For this reason the method adopted in this thesis is essentially a spatiotemporal one rather than thematic.

The approach taken starts with and is grounded in a detailed exploration and analysis of all the 'data' that can be found in primary sources concerning the Northmen making raids in Aquitaine and their dealings and confrontations with Frankish kings and local elites or potentates. These primary sources vary greatly in reliability, from the reasonably certain found in many annals, chronicles, acts and letters, to the much less reliable we find in numerous saints' *Lives* and *Translations* as well as in later chronicles; not forgetting any numismatic and archaeological evidence.[1] 'Source criticism' is taken very seriously and is entered into repeatedly throughout this work. But from Aquitaine it is necessary to spread our wings geographically and attempt to trace the connections of the Northmen involved during specific periods. This requires looking at likely or possibly related events elsewhere in the Frankish world (including Brittany and early Normandy), as well as in England, Ireland, Iberia and Frisia. In many cases we can establish these spatial and temporal connections without any, or much,

Différence? The Historical Value of Scandinavian Place-Names in England and Normandy', Cameron Lecture 2019, available online: https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/ins/cameron-lecture-2019.aspx.

[1] The question of the relative reliability of the texts used is discussed in many places throughout this thesis.

difficulty or doubt, and on an onomastic level we can sometimes even trace the movements of individual chieftains and their fleets and warbands as they constantly move around western Europe. But in many other cases we can only propose possible scenarios and make reasoned judgements and interpretations based on the available circumstantial and contextual evidence. In all these cases this thesis highlights possible different scenarios or interpretations as well as what generations of historians have made of these matters.

As has already been said, the approach taken here is sequential or chronological. It is, to quote Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: '"Begin at the beginning," the King said, very gravely, "and go on till you come to the end: then stop".'[1] This is what is done in this thesis. In some ways this is a rather old-fashioned approach but this is required because not only are there still many tricky and debatable chronological issues, but also because making any links or connections and tracing trajectories right across western Europe over more than two centuries requires in the first instance a decent grasp of absolute and relative chronologies.[2] This we can only undertake if we look at events one at a time and in great detail based on reliable sources without constantly jumping forwards and backwards over decades or even centuries, sometimes with the benefit of hindsight.

Scope of the study

As has previously been mentioned this thesis generally runs in chronological order but with some overlaps. Below is a very skimpy synopsis of what follows in the next fifteen chapters:

Chapter 2. The first Scandinavian raid into 'France' we are aware of took place not on northern parts but on some Aquitanian islands. Over the next more than thirty years Northmen repeatedly came back to the bay of Bourgneuf and the island of Noirmoutier at the mouth of the Loire. One of the reasons for their concentration on this area was very probably the existence of a thriving business in salt in the area.[3] In terms of origins, some of this early raiding in

[1] Cited from J. L. Nelson, *King and Emperor: A New Life of Charlemagne* (London, 2019), p. 7.

[2] Discussing Walther Vogel's book, P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 37, quoted and translated Vogel (cf. *Die Normannen*, p. v) as saying his book proposes 'une vue d'ensemble des expéditions vikings dans l'Empire franc', or originally 'Die vorliegende Arbeit schildert die gesamten Wikingerzüge nach Fränkischen Reiche […]'. But Bauduin then references Albert d'Haenens, *Les invasions Normandes en Belgique au IXe siècle*, pp. 235-38, and says Vogel's work gives '« une conception événementielle de l'Histoire » où comptait d'abord l'établissement des faits et de leur cadre spatio-temporel […]'. This is all quite correct and Bauduin contrasted this approach to his own more thematic and anthropological approach. But whilst Vogel's method did seek to establish the facts in their spatiotemporal frame it is not the case (and Bauduin does not say this) that Vogel really fully achieved this aim, and certainly not for Aquitaine.

[3] Following S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France: Was there a connection?', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 12 (2016), pp. 103-36, P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 78, says that these early raids were 'sans doute attirés par les activités lucratives générées par l'exploitation du sel dans le secteur'.

Aquitaine may have originated in Ireland, but it is very clear that at least one (and likely more) of these raids originated in Scandinavia or Frisia.

Chapter 3. From the beginning of the 840s the whole tenor and size of incursions changed. Having come from the North Sea (hence from either Scandinavia or Frisia) a significant fleet, led it seems by a chieftain called Oskar, made a raid up the Seine in 841 and was probably also responsible for raids in southern England and on the thriving *emporium* of Quentovic in 842, after which it sailed round the Breton peninsula and arrived on the Loire in 843 when it attacked and sacked the town of Nantes and killed its bishop. It was this fleet that over the next few years undertook many attacks in Aquitaine, even reaching Toulouse in 844 where a part of it split off to make the first Scandinavian expedition to Iberia. Thereafter the same fleet, or a part of it, continued raiding in Aquitaine until the spring of 849, including besieging Bordeaux over the winter of 847 and then capturing the city in early 848. Sometime after an attack on Périgueux in the spring of 849 these Northmen, still under Oskar it seems, went back to the Seine for a while before returning to their old stomping ground in Aquitaine in 852. In this chapter the oft-stated idea that these Northmen had come from Ireland and returned there thereafter is examined. The conclusion is that this Irish connection is unlikely to have been the case. Nevertheless, other connections with Scandinavia/Frisia, the Seine, probably England, and with Iberia, are most clear.

Chapter 4. The same fleet that had been operating in Aquitaine in the 840s under Oskar retuned to Aquitaine in 852. Its activities there and along the Loire in subsequent years can be traced with some precision. But during this time another Scandinavian fleet arrived on the lower Loire at Nantes (in 853) led by a chieftain called Sidroc (ON Sigtryggr), a man who had previously been active on the Seine. With the assistance of the Bretons, he besieged Oskar in his camp on the island of *Betia* near Nantes. In this encounter Sidroc was injured but he made a deal with the Northmen on *Betia* and then returned to the North.[1] Oskar's fleet however (maybe even under new leadership, but this is not at all clear) continued raiding in Aquitaine until 857 when in conjunction with Charles the Bald's nephew Pippin II of Aquitaine it made an attack on Poitiers. It was probably also these same Northmen who undertook the second Scandinavian expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean over the period 858 to 861. Here we once again see many connections between Aquitanian-active Northmen with the Seine and Iberia.

[1] It is quite possible that Sidroc was one of the returning overseas 'pirates' who contested for power in Denmark in 854.

Chapter 5. Before turning to the Loire and Aquitaine in the first half of the 860s, which certainly seem to have been the zenith or apogee of the Northmen's activities in south-western France, this chapter goes back to events on the Seine, the Somme and in England between 856 and 862. It was some of these Northmen, and particularly a chieftain called Weland, who, coupled with some of the vikings who had returned from Iberia in late 861 or early 862, were responsible for all the raids along the Loire and in Aquitaine over the course of the next few years. The 'career' of the chieftain Weland has never hitherto been examined in any depth.

Chapter 6. This chapter examines what the Northmen who had come from the Seine in 862 plus those who had returned from 'Spain' did on the Loire and in Aquitaine over the next few years. This includes not only their attack on Poitiers in late 863 but also the long-range raid to Clermont and the raid to Toulouse with Pippin II in tow, both in early 864. Mention is also made of the chieftain *Maurus* in 863 and his apparent successor Sigfrid who likely made the raid to Clermont. After this raid on Clermont Sigfrid went back to his base on the Charente by late 864 or early 865 and his last fight in this area is also explored.

Chapter 7. After 865 it is sometimes contended that the Northmen (under Sigfrid perhaps?) continued their activities in Aquitaine for several years to come. This chapter explores this question, particularly the two pieces of supposed 'evidence' usually adduced to support the idea of a continuing presence, notably the case of Archbishop Frotar of Bordeaux and some stories of the early eleventh-century chronicler Ademar of Chabannes. The conclusion is that it is unlikely that Northmen continued raiding in Aquitaine much after 865.

Chapter 8. This chapter examines in great detail the ideas of the Sorbonne and Pau historian Renée Mussot-Goulard in her 1982 work *Les princes de Gascogne*, which is itself based on the views of several earlier historians, that there was a continuous Scandinavian presence in Gascony south of the Garonne from 840 right through to the end of the ninth century, and even beyond. Examining all the purported evidence for this idea the conclusion is that although there were definitely some Scandinavian raids south of the Garonne into Gascony in the ninth century the idea of a ubiquitous and long-standing presence there is probably wrong.

Chapter 9. This chapter examines Scandinavian activities along the Loire, in Neustria and in Brittany from 864 until the siege of Angers in 873. Some of the Northmen involved were those who had returned from their raids further south, others however came from elsewhere. These included a chieftain called Baret who made the first attack on the Benedictine monastery at Fleury on the Loire in 865, but who had quite possibly arrived on the Loire the year before, maybe even from Ireland. Also, there is the historical character Alsting/Hasting who could well have arrived on the Loire at around this time, possibly from the Seine although this is not sure.

But it is quite likely that Alsting/Hasting was the leader of the Northmen who were eventually besieged by Charles the Bald at Angers in 873. So once again if we include the Loire valley in our definition of Aquitaine (which I do) we can also see here many connections with the Seine, with Brittany and with Ireland.

Chapter 10. This chapter examines what happened after the siege of Angers in 873 until Alsting/Hasting finally withdrew from the region in 882, and before he reappears on the Somme in 890. It looks like Alsting/Hasting spent the intervening years in Brittany and then again on the Loire, including joining with or being a mercenary for the Breton Pascweten. We also examine the second attack on the Fleury monastery, the role of Hugh the Abbot and what led up to Alsting/Hasting leaving the Loire in 882.

Chapter 11. After Alsting/Hasting (*Hæsten* in Anglo-Saxon sources) left northern Francia in 892 he made raids in England over the next four years. What became of him after that is completely unclear. But in 896 some Northmen from England came to France first under a leader called *Huncdeus*, but they were soon reinforced or just supplemented by many more Northmen come from either England or elsewhere.[1] These Northmen then made an incursion into Aquitaine over the winter of 897-898 before returning north. This chapter examines this short incursion into Aquitaine and what these Northmen did on their return north. It also considers the possible raid up the river Canche to Quentovic in *c*.898. In addition, the attack on Tours on the Loire in 903 is explored from historical sources including the writings of Radbod the early tenth-century bishop of Utrecht. This raid had a very clear Irish connection. We also look at the burning of the Breton monastery of Landévennec in 913 and how the Northmen responsible subsequently moved on to southwest England, south Wales and Ireland, from where some of them went to Northumbria fought at Corbridge and then captured York in 919. We also consider the nearly 1,000 Carolingian coins contained in the Cuerdale hoard found on the river Ribble in present-day Lancashire and how they were likely gathered during one or both of the incursions along the Loire and in Aquitaine in 897-898 and 903, plus, perhaps, the raid to Quentovic in *c*.898. Although several things remain obscure the period around the turn of the century, roughly from 896 to *c*.918, demonstrates the numerous real connections between Northmen operating in southern and northern England, in northern France, in Brittany, in Ireland and the Irish Sea zone, and of course in Aquitaine.

[1] As is discussed in Chapter 11 Huncdeus originally arrived from England with only five ships, not a great force. Those who came shortly afterwards were obviously a stronger force but whether they too came from England is unclear.

Chapter 12. This chapter examines the activities and connections of the Northmen who had come back to the Loire and Brittany by about 918, it seems under a leader called Ragenold (ON Rögnvaldr). Ragenold was at least as important as the 'founder' of Normandy Rollo with whom he had connections and his 'career' has never hitherto been studied. He moved and raided far and wide, in Brittany, on the Loire, in Poitou, deep into Aquitaine as far as the Auvergne, in Francia (leading some of the Rouen-based Northmen), and then into Burgundy before he headed back north and died on the Seine, possibly near Rouen, in about 925. Ragenold was also responsible for the third and last attack on the monastery of Fleury.

Chapter 13. After Ragenold's death on the Seine other Scandinavian chieftains took his place. This chapter examines their activities on the Loire, in Aquitaine and in Brittany until they were finally expelled from Brittany in 939 by the Breton prince Alan Barbe-Torte who had returned from his exile in England in 936. The possible identity of these chieftains called Incon and Felecan is also explored as well as the Breton revolt of 931.

Chapter 14. The next appearance of Northmen in the area of Brittany and the Loire dates to the late 950s. This has often been linked with Richard I's Northmen and with the so-called Norman War. This 'Norman War' only told of in an unreliable story of Dudo of Saint-Quentin is explored in some detail and it was certainly overblown if it ever happened at all. But what is clear is the incursion to Nantes in the late 950s was certainly not undertaken by Richard I's men nor even by men hired by him. The most likely (but not certain) origin of those responsible is northern England, in fact Scandinavian York. Also explored is the story of the Scandinavian helpers Richard called in to help him in the 960s and how eventually some of them left for Spain.

Chapter 15. This chapter explores a possible incursion into Aquitanian Gascony, perhaps in the late 970s to early 980s. Much of the 'evidence' for this comes from some very late and debatable local sources. Nevertheless, there were raids into northern Iberia in the late 960s to early 970s and it is possible that some of the Northmen responsible had made raids into Aquitaine thereafter, maybe even then going on to southern England. In this context the legendary 'Battle of Taller' (in Gascon Landes) is also assessed, although if such a battle did happen near the present Landes village of Taller near Castets, which can be very much doubted, it was almost certainly not in 982 as has been maintained by many earlier historians.

Chapter 16. The swansong of the Northmen in Aquitaine was the early eleventh century. This chapter presents and analyses the three main sources of evidence for this incursion: Ademar of Chabannes's *Chronicon*, the skaldic verses of Sigvatr Þórðarson about Olaf Haraldsson's early 'viking career' called nowadays the *Víkingarvísur*, and some of William of

Jumièges's stories in his *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, all in the context of what we know about Scandinavian warbands operating in England, Brittany, on the Seine, in Ireland and in Iberia at this time. The conclusion is that there were extensive raids in Aquitaine over the period of 1012 to 1013 which did not however likely ever reach northern Spain as is usually contended, those responsible (probably including a very young Olaf) had come from England and there are also some very clear Irish and Irish Sea zone connections.

Finally, there are three appendices. Appendix 1 looks at the views of some other historians regarding Scandinavian activities along the Loire and in Aquitaine in the 850s, whilst Appendix 2 asks if there was or was not an attack from the Loire into northern Neustria in 863. Appendix 3 examines in a very preliminary manner whether the story of the foundation of the abbey of Maillezais in Poitevin Vendée and a *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux* can tell us anything about Scandinavian activities in Aquitaine north of the Garonne in the late tenth century.

The above very minimalist thumbnail sketches of the chapters that follow in this thesis have of necessity missed out the vast bulk of the contents and argumentation presented. One must read these chapters in their totality to understand all the complexity and the necessary nuances. Nevertheless, what is clear, and will become even more clear, is that all the appearances of Northmen in Aquitaine, which sometimes lasted for years, were all connected in a very direct way - via the fleets and chieftains involved - with happenings elsewhere in western Europe. The Scandinavians operating in Aquitaine at different times over more than two hundred years should really never be referred to as the 'Vikings in Aquitaine' or the 'Vikings on the Loire' or similar except when a very specific period is meant. As Simon Coupland puts it: 'It is (...) misleading to speak of 'the Seine Vikings', 'the Loire Vikings' or even the 'Great Army', except with reference to a specific army at a particular time.'[1]

[1] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', p. 195.

Chapter 2

THE EARLIEST RAIDS IN AQUITAINE AND THE QUESTION OF SALT

Scandinavian raiders, or vikings if one prefers, suddenly started to appear around the coasts of western Europe in the late eighth century and in the early decades of the ninth century.[1] The reasons for this sudden eruption have long been discussed and debated by scholars without any real consensus having ever been reached. In this thesis I will not add anything of significance to this debate regarding, to use Peter Sawyer's phrase, 'The causes of the Viking Age';[2] the emphasis throughout will be on trying to understand in a Rankean sense what actually happened rather than speculation of why it happened, a question which is ultimately unanswerable.

In the British Isles the first raids were pretty small although usually brutal affairs, such as that on the monastery of Lindisfarne in Northumberland in 793 and on the monastery of Iona in 795. The Northmen were to make their presence felt all over Europe for the next two hundred years. In the early years their numbers were few and the aim seems to have been simply to plunder. In later years, as the size of their fleets and armies grew, trying to grab land to exploit and settle became of more importance,[3] although their desire for settlement and integration into the Frankish realm and society has been much exaggerated by many historians. The Northmen were also sometimes paid by the Frankish and other kings to fight on their behalf as well as being bought-off by these rulers to leave their territories, although they often eventually came back for more.[4] As the Northumbrian English ecclesiastic and teacher Alcuin wrote,[5] the Northmen who had attacked Lindisfarne had 'spoiled' it 'of all its ornaments', meaning church silver and gold and valuable holy books.[6] They also took away youths to be sold into slavery in their *emporia* back home, such as Hedeby in southern Jutland or elsewhere, perhaps in Muslim Iberia. Yet was this always their aim?

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[1] An earlier, shorter and somewhat different version of this chapter was published as S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France: Was there a connection?', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 12 (2016), pp. 103-36.

[2] P. H. Sawyer, 'The causes of the Viking Age', in R. T. Farrell (ed.), *The Vikings* (London and Chichester, 1982), pp. 1-7. There is an abundant literature on this issue going back well over a hundred years.

[3] L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)*.

[4] Cf. S. Coupland, 'The Frankish tribute payments to the Vikings and their consequences'; E. Joranson, *The Danegeld in France* (Rock Island, Ill, 1923).

[5] Alcuin had 'retired' to Tours in 796.

[6] G. F. Browne, *Alcuin of York, Lectures Delivered in the Cathedral Church of Bristol in 1907 and 1908* (London, 1908), pp. 129, 132.

Concerning the very earliest Scandinavian raids in France it is the purpose of this chapter to examine these raids in detail and also to pose and explore the question of whether the presence and importance of salt production and trade on the island of Noirmoutier as well as on the neighbouring islands and coastal salt marshes in Aquitaine and the Breton March could have been a major draw for the Northmen.

The Northmen were certainly often opportunistic raiders in search of treasures to pillage. But whilst it was no doubt not the only reason might not the sea salt of the bay of Bourgneuf help us understand why they made this generally poor and remote coastal area a significant target during the first decades of the ninth century - and perhaps even later too? Although earlier historians briefly suggested such a link,[1] as more recently have a number of French historians,[2] this connection has never been explored in detail probably because of the paucity of explicit written evidence and the complete lack of any conclusive archaeological support. After examining these early raids in detail, the importance of salt production and trade in this part of France in the early medieval period will be highlighted before suggesting the possibility that one of the objectives of the Northmen might well have been salt. The question of how the Northmen might have been able to profit from salt will also be posed and different possibilities explored.

Early raids and the Noirmoutier monastery

The Northmen seem to have started to make their presence felt in the Frankish realm in 799, six years after the attack on Lindisfarne. The Northumbrian cleric Alcuin is our only source regarding this first appearance of Scandinavian raiders in France. After the 799 attack Alcuin wrote from Tours to his friend and pupil Arno, the bishop of Salzburg, telling him that:

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 62; T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings* (London, 1930), p. 93; A. Agats, *Der hansische Baienhandel* (Heidelberg, 1904), p. 8.

[2] For example J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français : le cas des ports du sel (VIe-XVe siècle)', *Historia, instituciones, documentos*, 35 (2008), pp. 107-26, at p. 110; É. Boutin, 'La Hanse et la Baie', *Bulletins de la société des historiens du Pays de Retz* (1982), p. 2, available online at http://www.shpr.fr/?La-Hanse-et-la-Baie; *idem*, *La baie de Bretagne et sa contrebande : Sel, vin, tabac, indiennes* (Nantes, 1993), pp. 28-30; *idem*, 'Les moines et le sel de la Baie', *Bulletins de la société des historiens du Pays de Retz*, 13 (1993), available online at <http://www.shpr.fr/?Les-moines-et-le-sel-de-la-Baie>; É. Boutin and M. Guitteny, *Le sel de l'Atlantique. Les secrets de l'or blanc* (Fromentine, 1992), p. 2; Frapel [= François Pelletier], 'Zierikzee. L'exportation du sel de la Baie de Bourgneuf', *Lettres aux Amis de l'Île de Noirmoutier*, 74 (Noirmoutier, 1989), pp. 3-7, at p. 3.

> Pagan ships have done much damage to the islands off Aquitaine [...] (*per insulas Oceani partibus Aquitaniae*). Some of them were destroyed, and about a hundred and five pirates were killed on the beach [...].[1]

It seems that 105 of the raiders perished on the shore, although it is unclear exactly how, or specifically on which Aquitanian island or islands. Vogel suggested that the rest probably 'suffered in the storms' after their retreat.[2] The twelfth-century Northumbrian *Historia regum*[3] says that in this year 'very many ships were wrecked by a violent storm in the Britannic Sea (*in mari Britannico*) and shattered or dashed to pieces and sunk, with a great number of men'. Britannic Sea here probably has the meaning of from the western reaches of the English Channel and the whole 'Ocean' along the Atlantic littoral to the Loire and even beyond.[4] That these storms actually affected the Northmen is just conjecture.[5] Like many other early medieval churchmen Alcuin saw this raid as God's punishment on his 'servants' who had abandoned their religious vows. It is of interest that nowhere in his letter to Bishop Arno did Alcuin mention that any monks had been killed or that youths had been taken as slaves as he had in some of the letters he wrote in 793 regarding the attack on Lindisfarne.

By the islands off the coast of Aquitaine Alcuin may have been referring to Noirmoutier or other islands in the vicinity such as the Île de Bouin or the Île de Batz (now Batz-sur-Mer on the Guérande peninsula), both of which are in the bay of Bourgneuf,[6] but perhaps also islands which lie further south along the Atlantic 'Ocean' coast of Aquitaine (the coasts of the Vendée

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[1] S. Allott, *Alcuin of York: His Life and Letters* (York, 1974), p. 79. 'Paganae vero naves, ut audistis, multa mala fecerunt per insulas Oceani partibus Aquitaniae. Pars tamen ex illis periit; et occisi sunt in litore quasi centum quinque viri ex illis praedatoribus. Castigatio est magna horum eruptio, antiquis ignota temporibus populo christiano; quia forte vota non servant famuli Dei quae vovere solent': *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*, vol. 6, *Monumenta Alcuiniana*, eds. P. Jaffé, E. Dümmler and W. Wattenbach (Berlin, 1873), p. 512; also found in *Alcuini Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, *MGH*, *Epistolae Karolini aevi*, II (Berlin, 1895), no. 184, p. 309.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 51.

[3] T. Arnold, ed. *Symeonis Monachi opera omnia*, 2 vols, Rolls Series (London, 1882-85), vol. 2 (1885), pp. 61-62.

[4] J.-C. Cassard, 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens', in M. Balard (ed.), *L'Europe et l'Océan au Moyen Age. Contribution à l'Histoire de la Navigation* ; *Actes des congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, 17e congrès, Nantes, 1986* (Paris, 1988), pp. 19-36, at p. 28; E. James, 'Ireland and Western Gaul in the Merovingian Period', in D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick, and D. N. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 362-86, at p. 376. For a full discusion of the term *Mare britannicum* and similar at this time see P. Marquand, '*Mare britannicum* : une dénomination de l'espace maritime atlantique des côtes ibériques aux îles britanniques, depuis l'Antiquité jusqu'au milieu du Moyen Âge' (2011), available online at https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00624187.

[5] Here it would be worthwhile examining the relationships between the *Historia regum* and Frankish sources including Alcuin, for which see in general J. Story, *Charlemagne and Northumbria: the influence of Francia on Northumbrian politics in the later eighth and early ninth centuries*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Durham University, 1995); *eadem*, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia c. 750-. 870* (Aldershot, 2003).

[6] The latter at least is not strictly in Aquitaine, being in Brittany.

and lower Poitou) such as the Île d'Yeu, the Île de Ré or Île d'Oléron, the latter two of which are located near the mouths of the rivers Gironde/Garonne and Charente respectively.[1]

Although Muslim 'Saracens' were still active in the area at the time - or at least earlier in the eighth century - it has usually been accepted that these particular pagans were not Saracens but rather Northmen.[2] Alternatively Simon Coupland says: 'Since the raiders were identified only as *pagani* they may well have been Moorish pirates, who are known to have been active in this area in the eighth century.'[3] He references here Ermentarius's second book of *Miracles of Saint Philibert*,[4] which Delhommeau and Bouhier translate as:

> On raconte aussi qu'un navire de Sarrasins tellement grand qu'on eut presque dit un mur pour qui le regarderait arriva de l'île d'Yeu. Lorsqu'ils eurent fait ce qu'ils voulaient dans cette île, ils décidèrent d'accoster à notre port [of Noirmoutier]. Ils en étaient à mi-chemin lorsqu'une si grande multitude d'oiseaux se posa sur notre rivage que jamais et nulle part, dit-on, on n'en avait tant vu. A cette vue, les Sarrasins crurent que ce n'était rien d'autre qu'une innombrable armée de guerriers ; effrayés par cette découverte, ils font demi-tour, n'osant pas aborder dans notre île.[5]

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[1] B. von Simson in S. Abel and B. von Simson, *Jahrbücher des Fränkischen Reiches unter Karl dem Großen*, II (Leipzig, 1888), p. 207, says: 'Unter den betreffenden Inseln werden die île d'Oléron und die île de Ré (Radia), veillecht auch die île d'Yeu (Oia) und Noirmoutiers (Herio) zu verstehen sein.' Simson should not really be so emphatic here. This suggestion was explicitly taken up by Dümmler in his 1895 *MGH* edition (p. 309, n. 5) but he dropped the Île d'Oléron and any 'perhaps'. C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, pp. 101-12, suggests that whilst Noirmoutier could have been attacked the Île d'Yeu and the Île de Ré were unlikely 'overlooked during this same expedition', a point also made in S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France', p. 106.

[2] Cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 51, says that Saracens were 'never called pagans' in the chronicles and annals of the time, which as discussed below is not correct. For that these attackers really were Northmen see among others, and in no chronological order: P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 77; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert,* pp. 32-33; I. Cartron and L. Bourgeois, 'Noirmoutier-en-l'Île (Vendée), monastère d'Herio', in L. Bourgeois (ed.), *Fortifications et résidences des élites du haut Moyen Âge entre Loire et Garonne, Rapport du Projet Collectif de Recherche* (Poitiers, 2008), pp. 35-42, at p. 36; N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne. Géographie historique et structures sociales de la Bretagne méridionale (Nantais et Vannetais) de la fin du VIIIe siècle à la fin du XIIe siècle* (Angers, 1994), p. 270; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne* (Paris, 1996), p. 15; J. Renaud, *Les Vikings en France* (Rennes, 2000), p. 13; *idem*, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine* (Pau, 2003), p. 19; *idem*, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings* (Verrières, 2008), p. 16; M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences', p. 247; H. Zettel, *Das Bild der Normannen und der Normanneneinfälle in westfränkischen, ostfränkischen und angelsächsischen Quellen des 8. bis 11. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1977), p. 172; L. Musset, *Les invasions: le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne*, p. 224; J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen bij de Zee* (Haarlem, 1923), pp. 101-3; É. Ridel, 'From Scotland to Normandy: The Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings', in B. Ballin Smith, S. Taylor, and G. Williams (eds.), *West over Sea: Studies in Scandinavian Sea-Borne Expansion and Settlement before 1300* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 81-94, at p. 86.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 7.

[4] See Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, in *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert (Noirmoutier, Grandlieu, Tournus)*, ed. R. Poupardin (Paris, 1905) [hereafter *Miracles of Saint Philibert*], book II, chap. 10, p. 66.

[5] Ermentarius, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, trans. L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier (Noirmoutier, 1999), pp. 136-37.

They then ask: 'Est-ce une allusion à une destruction du monastère de l'île d'Yeu au début du VIIIème siècle ?'[1] This is quite possible and certainly much more likely than being a reference to the very end of the eighth century.[2]

Simon Coupland also quite rightly maintains that Vogel is 'wrong to claim that Moors were never called *pagani*' because 'Alcuin himself used the term *pagani* to denote the Moors in another letter of 799 [...], as did Charlemagne in a letter three years earlier [...]'.[3] But although both these letters call the Saracens/Moors 'pagans' they are, it seems, in no way connected with any Moorish activity as far north as the Loire mouth at the end of the century.[4] On balance therefore I tend to the usual view that the pagans of 799 were indeed Northmen come either from the Channel, and hence from Scandinavia, or just maybe from Ireland or the Irish Sea zone.[5]

With the support of Bishop Ansoald of Poitiers the Gascon-born monk Philibert of Jumièges founded a small monastery on the northerly coast of Noirmoutier in 677 and died on 20 August of an indeterminate year sometime after 684, perhaps even as late as 688.[6] At the time, and for some time to come, Noirmoutier was called the island of Her, Hero or Herio and then, compounded with the word for monastery, Hermoutier. Later the name was further corrupted

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 137.

[2] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', pp. 246-47, considered ideas regarding any Saracen appearance in Lower Poitou at the turn of the century, or even later. He concludes regarding late dates (p. 247): 'Rien ne prouve que les musulmans vinrent alors jusqu'en Bas-Poitou. On peut faire remonter, croyons-nous, avec plus de vraisemblance, le récit d'Ermentaire à une date antérieure. Il semble, en effet, que les Sarrasins aient fait avec succès des expéditions en Bas-Poitou avant le règne de Charlemagne.'

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 7, n. 3. This point is also made by C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, p. 115, n. 13. Cooijmans gives examples mentioned in J. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002), p. 77; M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 348. In Cooijman's opinion (p. 102) the theory 'which instead proposes that the incursion was perpetrated by Saracen seafarers, should not be summarily dismissed'.

[4] These two letters are to be found respectively in *MGH*, *Epistolae*, IV, ed. E. Dümmler (Berlin, 1895), at p. 282 and p. 137.

[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 51. É. Ridel, 'From Scotland to Normandy: The Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings', p. 86, was quite wrong to so confidently assert that 'there is absolutely no doubt that this raid was carried out by Norwegians from their Scottish dependances'. In fact, there is quite a lot of doubt; as C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, p. 102, rightly points out this 'makes excessive demands on available evidence'. Similarly J. Renaud, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings*, p. 16, asserts 'without doubt' that 'leur "coup de main" sur les îles de l'atlantique est sans doute à rapprocher de leur attaque sur l'île de Man, en 798', a statement he made earlier in J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, p. 19.

[6] For differing opinions on the precise date of Philibert's death compare R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXIV, and n. 6; L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 65, p. 70, n. 63; P. Riché and P. Perrin, *Dictionnaire des Francs. Les temps mérovingiens* (Paris, 1996), p. 26; E.-J. Tardif, *Les chartes mérovingiennes de l'abbaye de Noirmoutier : avec une étude sur la chronologie du règne de Dagobert II* (Paris, 1899), p. 62; P. Riché, *Sur les pas de saint Philibert* (Mâcon, 1994). On this foundation see also G. Pon, 'Le monachisme en Poitou avant l'époque carolingienne', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest et des musées de Poitiers*, 4. 17 (1984), pp. 91-130.

to Noirmoutier.[1] It has sometimes been suggested that the first small monastery on the coast of the island was probably destroyed by the Saracens in about 732,[2] but it was either refounded or, following a long period of lax religious practice, its monastic spirit was reinvigorated by Atto, the new bishop of Saintes (d. *c*.819), in the first years of the ninth century, sometime after the first Scandinavian raid in the area in 799.[3]

T. D. Kendrick wrote that the monastery of Saint Philibert was not 'a provokingly wealthy institution' but was nevertheless:

> one of some prosperity inasmuch as the island was a port of call for the barques employed in the salt-trade that was then, as now, the chief industry of the Breton marsh-lands. As such, Noirmoutier was doubtless well known to the northern adventurer-merchants, and it was this place that became the first goal of northern pirates in the Atlantic waters.[4]

Simon Coupland elaborates on the economic life of the island at this time:

> There was good fishing in the Atlantic and the Loire, whales sometimes washed up on the coast, and the local bay may also have been the site of oyster beds. The monks sold meat and skins from their cattle, and there is known to have been a market on the island. Ships from Bordeaux, Brittany and Ireland all put into the port of Noirmoutier and traded with the monks, who bought from them oil, wheat, and shoes and clothing respectively.[5]

Coupland also makes the point: 'We know that then, as now, the area was an important centre of salt production, and the abbey was granted exemption from tolls for six ships to sell its salt from the Loire to the Garonne'.[6] This exemption was made on 18 May 826 by Pippin I of Aquitaine.[7]

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[1] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXII; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 91, n. 1.

[2] This idea links the story contained in Ermentarius's *Life and Miracles of Saint Philibert* with the Umayyad/Muslim advance towards Tours, resulting in the defeat of Abd al-Rahman's army by the Franks somewhere between Poitiers and Tours in the year 732, a subject that is well outside the scope of this work, but it should be noted that whilst Ermentarius's *Miracles* mention the Île d'Yeu being attacked they go on to say that the Saracens 'bottled it' before Noirmoutier.

[3] *Acta Sanctorum ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, ed. J. Mabillon, 9 vols (Paris, 1668-1701) [hereafter *AA*, *SS*, *OSB*], II, p. 571; L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', pp. 247-48; R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, pp. XXII and XXV; I. Cartron and L. Bourgeois, 'Noirmoutier-en-l'Île', p. 36.

[4] T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings*, p. 193.

[5] S. Coupland, 'Ermentarius: how reliable was the monk of Noirmoutier?', forthcoming.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] *Recueil des actes de Pépin Ier et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (814-848)* [hereafter *RAP*], eds. L. Levillain and M. Prou (Paris, 1926), no. 6, pp. 19-21; R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, Act 2, p. 108: 'Pépin I, roi d'Aquitaine, à la requête de l'abbé Hilbod, confirme le précepte de Louis le Pieux accordant au monastère de Saint-Philibert l'exemption de tonlieu pour six bateaux sur la Loire, l'Allier, le Cher et la Dordogne.' Referring to this confirmation by Pippin I in 826, O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique en France septentrionale (VIIIe - XIe siècles', *Annales de Bretagne et Pays de l'Ouest*, 115. 3 (2008), pp. 7-32, at p. 29, says: 'Seule l'abbaye de Noirmoutier bénéficie d'une dotation un peu supérieure [he is making a comparison here to that given to Charroux for three 'salt' ships to circulate on the Charente] avec six navires, mais il faut se rappeler que, hormis le sel, elle n'a pas grand chose à proposer, aussi n'y a-t-il rien de surprenant à la voir se tourner vers

It is clear that the monks of Noirmoutier controlled salt production on the island as monks often did elsewhere in the Frankish realm. Indeed, it is even possible that it was the presence of the salt marshes that attracted them to establish themselves on Noirmoutier in the first place. Even if salt gardens (French *salines*) were not already in operation there, as they certainly were on some of the nearby mainland properties granted to the monastery on its foundation, then Philibert soon established them with the probable objective of trading in the commodity. Émile Boutin observes (without justification), Philibert's monks included salt workers and mariners:

> Philibert, installed on Noirmoutier, immediately understands the value of salt at this time. He was going to harvest a lot of it, and had many *marais salants* cut on the island. He was also going to use them for trade, because his many monks were at once masons, carpenters, labourers, salt workers and mariners.[1]

At about the same time as the first raid on some Aquitanian islands the kingdom of the Franks under Charlemagne was also suffering from Scandinavian incursions. In March 800, nine months before he had himself crowned emperor, Charles left his capital at Aachen and went to the Channel coast. He ordered that coast guards be established and ships constructed to protect the northern coast of his kingdom from pirates: 'He himself left the palace of Aachen in the middle of March, and traversed the shore of the Gallic sea. He built a fleet on this sea, which was then infested with pirates, set guards in different places, and celebrated Easter at St. Riquier'[2].

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ce type d'activité pour assurer les besoins de la communauté', and adds (p. 29, n. 73) that: 'Seule une cargaison d'un certain prix comme le sel pouvait justifier de tels voyages qui pénètrent loin à l'intérieur des terres.' I. Cartron, 'Saint-Philbert de Grandlieu (Vendée), Monastère de Deas', in L. Bourgeois (ed.), *Fortifications et résidences des élites du haut Moyen Âge entre Loire et Garonne*, pp. 43-47, at p. 45, says: 'Les moines bénéficient depuis 826 d'une exemption pour six navires, octroyée par Pépin Ier, sur les fleuves d'Aquitaine et même si les moines sont encore à *Herio*, l'établissement de Deas existe déjà constitue sans doute alors un relais essentiel sur le continent pour les moines.' See also I. Cartron and L. Bourgeois, 'Noirmoutier-en-l'Île (Vendée), monastère d'Herio', in L. Bourgeois (ed.), *Fortifications et résidences des élites du haut Moyen Âge entre Loire et Garonne*, pp. 35-42, at p. 35. A year later, I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 33, wrote that this exemption 'témoigne d'une activité économique non négligable qui ne parait pas encore entravée par les incursions' (of the Northmen). Certainly, the Northmen did not appear in the area in every year but they had been there in 820 (for which see below), so perhaps the word *encore* is a little hardy. Nevertheless, although we know that the Northmen were back by 830 and most probably earlier (see below) perhaps around 826 there was a lull.

[1] É. Boutin, 'Les moines et le sel de la Baie', my translation.

[2] *Annales regni Francorum, inde ab a. 741 usque ad a. 829: qui dicuntur Annales laurissenses maiores et Einhardi*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH, SRG,* 5 (Hanover, 1895) [hereafter *ARF*], *s.a.* 800, pp. 110-11; *Royal Frankish Annals* [hereafter *RFA*] *s.a.* 800: *Carolingian Chronicles, Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories*, trans. B. W. Walter (Ann Arbor, 1972), p. 78. For the view that these pirates were not connected with Frankish skirmishes with the 'Danish' leaders at the time see: S. Walther, 'The Vikings in the Rhinelands according to Latin Sources', in R. Simek and U. Engel (eds.), *Vikings on the Rhine. Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia* (Vienna, 2004), pp. 165-77, at p. 169; R. McKitterick, *Karl der Grosse* (Darmstadt, 2008), p. 121; V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation: Dänemark und das Frankenreich im 9. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2011), p. 62, n. 242.

Obviously defensive measures along the Channel coast were more important than in faraway Aquitaine, although these attacks in the south may have prompted Charlemagne's measures.[1]

Over the next three or four decades the Franks were much preoccupied with Denmark and Frisia, the latter of which at the time extended along the coast from southern Jutland to the border of present-day Belgium. Although the Danish 'kingdom' was centred on southern Jutland, its 'kings' sometimes claimed suzerainty over other parts of Denmark and southern areas of modern Norway and Sweden. Two factions of the royal family - the family of Harald Klak and the family of Godfrid - competed for power, and various shifting alliances existed between the Danes and the Frankish emperor Charles, his son Louis the Pious and, both before and after Louis's death in 840, Louis's sons Charles the Bald, Louis the German and Lothar I.

After 799 the next specific record of Scandinavians raiding in the Loire mouth area comes in 820. The *Royal Frankish Annals* say:

> de Nordmannia vero tredecim piraticae naves egressae primo in Flandrensi litore praedari molientes ab his, qui in praesidio erant, repulsae sunt; ubi tamen ab eis propter custodum incuriam aliquot casae viles incensae et parvus pecoris numerus abactus est. In ostio Sequanae similia temptantes resistentibus sibi litoris custodibus quinque quorum interfectis inritae recesserunt. Tandem in Aquitanico litore prosperis usae successibus

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 51-52. During the rest of Charlemagne's reign and during that of his son Louis the Pious coastal defence against Scandinavian (and other) pirates was a major concern. In his *Vita Karoli Magni* (*Life of Charlemagne*) Einhard 'noted that this involved stationing garrisons in all ports and river mouths navigable to ships' (cf. S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 1): see Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *SRG*, 25 (Hanovcr and Leipzig, 1911), chap. 17, p. 21; *Einhard, The Life of Charles the Emperor*, in T. F. X. Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer* (Philadelphia, 2009), pp. 7-50, at chap. 17, pp. 36-37. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 128, notes that 'a capitulary issued in 802 to the king's agents, the *missi*, in the Seine valley indicates that these permanent guards could call on additional local support if danger threatened, in that all men living along the coast had to turn out if an alert was sounded. Free Franks who failed to respond to the summons would face the considerable fine of twenty *solidi* while unfree would pay half this sum and receive a flogging': cf. *Capitulare missorum specialia*, chap. 13, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, I, ed. A. Boretius, *MGH*, *Leges* (Hanover, 1883), pp. 100-1. In 808 and 810 Charlemagne again ordered ships to be built to guard the coast and in 811 he visited Boulogne to inspect them: see *Capitula cum primis conferenda*, chap. 10, *Capitulare missorum Aquisgranense primum*, chap. 16, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, I, pp. 139 and 153; *ARF* 811: ed. Kurze, p. 135; *RFA s.a.* 811: trans. Scholz, p. 94: 'In the meantime, the emperor himself went to the port city of Boulogne in order to inspect the fleet whose construction he had ordered the year before. There the ships in question had assembled.' The *Capitulary of Boulogne* was also issued in 811 and decreed that the magnates [*seniores*] should be ready to put to sea at the emperor's command (S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 127): *Capitulare Bononiense*, chap. 11, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, I, p. 167. S. Coupland (*Unpublished book*, chap. 1) says that the building of this fleet had 'probably assumed added urgency when an Anglo-Saxon envoy, Aldulf, was captured by "piratis", most likely Scandinavian, on his way from Northumbria to Rome in 809': for which see *ARF s.a.* 809: ed. Kurze, p. 128; *RFA s.a.* 809: trans. Scholz, pp. 89-90. Whether this fleet ever saw action or not is not known, there is certainly no evidence for it, but I. Cartron (*Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 33) suggests that: 'Cette mise en défense a pu se révéler efficace car tout grave dommage fut épargné à la Gaule pendant le régne de l'empereur.'

> vico quodam, qui vocatur Buyn, ad integrum depopulato cum ingenti praeda ad propia reversae sunt.[1]

> from the land of the Norsemen, on the other hand, thirteen pirate vessels set out and tried to plunder on the shores of Flanders, but were repelled by guards. But because of the carelessness of the defenders, some wretched huts were burned down and a small number of cattle taken away. When the Norsemen made similar attempts on the mouth of the River Seine, the coast guards fought back, and the pirates retreated empty-handed after losing five men. Finally, on the coast of Aquitaine they met with success, thoroughly plundered a village by the name of Bouin, and then returned home with immense booty.[2]

The contemporary ninth-century Astronomer's *Life of Emperor Louis* tells essentially the same story:

> the same time [820] it was announced to the emperor that thirteen ships from the lands of the Northmen had sailed across the sea and planned to attack and lay waste our coasts. When the emperor commanded that lookouts and guards be arranged against them, they were driven from Flemish soil and from the mouth of the Seine. They turned to Aquitaine, wasted a village named Bouin [*Bundium*] and went home having loaded up a great deal of booty.[3]

So, a small flotilla of longships had first tried to make a landing in Flanders but the shore-based Frankish coast guard had driven them off, although they did manage to burn a few huts and take a few cows.[4] A second landing attempt had then been made further west at the mouth of the River Seine, but this also failed and cost the lives of five Northmen. This small fleet then sailed round the Breton peninsula and, as the contemporary sources explicitly tell us, arrived at the

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[1] *ARF s.a.* 820: ed. Kurze, p. 153.
[2] *RFA s.a.* 820: trans. Scholz, pp. 107-8.
[3] Astronomer, *Life of Emperor Louis*: in T. F. X. Noble (trans.), *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer* (Philadelphia, 2009), chap. 33, p. 261; *Vita Hludowici imperatoris*, ed. E. Tremp, *MGH*, *SRG*, 64 (Hanover, 1995), pp. 279-554, at pp. 399-400.
[4] C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, p. 110, offers the idea: 'The expedition of 820, ultimately bound for Aquitaine, is also noted for having carried away "a small number of cattle" from coastal Flanders. As with the transport of captives, hauling livestock over great distances would not have been a cost-efficient exercise for incipient Viking hosts, which may have instead seized these animals to sustain a transitory outpost nearby.' This is a most interesting thought regarding Cooijmans's general hypothesis of multiple unreported bases or outposts. On the other hand, maybe they just took the cows to eat or even trade? But as the landing in Flanders happened at the end of 819 and their arrival at Bouin took place in early 820 it is clear that they must have overwintered somewhere along the way between these two places, so perhaps Cooijmans's idea of a literally 'transitory outpost' is correct, although it was not necessarily so 'nearby'.

island of Bouin in the bay of Bourgneuf at the mouth of the Loire, although: 'We do not know if the monastery [of Noirmoutier] also had to suffer the ravages of the pagans.'[1]

That these particular Northmen had come 'from the land of the Norsemen/Northmen' (*de Nordmannia*) and then first been driven from Flemish soil before arriving on the Seine and then at Bouin would strongly suggest that they originally came from Frisia or Denmark.[2] Vogel strongly argued for a Danish origin,[3] but he also suggested Ireland as their destination after they had left Bouin with their booty.[4] Certainly after an eight-year gap some Northmen were making raids in the Irish Sea in 821 - on Howth and on the churches in the islets of Wexford harbour and on the south coast.[5] There were also repeated attacks in Ireland over the next few years. Thus, it is at least possible that the Northmen who had been at Bouin in 820 did then move on to Ireland although an alternative theory could be proposed. That is that as there had already been attacks in the area in earlier years and there would be more over the coming years (to be discussed shortly) perhaps the Northmen had from time to time established temporary raiding bases in the area where they could overwinter for one or more years. There is some very real evidence that they did this elsewhere at an early date, most particularly in Ireland,[6] and just perhaps in the Irish Sea zone in general, and on the east coast of Britain, and even in Scotland.[7] Although it is generally said that Scandinavians only overwintered in Aquitaine for the first time after the sack of Nantes in 843,[8] and after each earlier attack they had returned either to Scandinavia or perhaps Ireland, maybe this was not so. As there is no historical or archaeological evidence for any overwintering near the Loire or along the Aquitanian coast until 843 this idea is just a conjecture, nevertheless it has recently been argued for by Christian Cooijmans who sums up his theory by saying:

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[1] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXVI, my translation.
[2] Or Scandinavia more widely.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 62; a view also held *inter alia* by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 7-8.
[4] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 65.
[5] Cf. *Annals of Ulster* [hereafter *AU*] 821.3, *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131): Text and Translation*, eds. and trans. S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (Dublin, 1983): 'Étar was plundered by the heathens, and they carried off a great number of women into captivity.' The later *Annals of the Four Masters* [hereafter *AFM*] repeat the same under the year 819 but add as well, 'The plundering of Beg Eire and Dairinis Caemhain by them also': *Annala Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616*, ed. and trans. J. O'Donovan, 2nd edn, 7 vols (Dublin 1856), M819.4. For more on these early raids in Ireland see D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', *Peritia*, 12 (1998), pp. 296-339; C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*.
[6] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chapters 2 and 6.
[7] For this idea see C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, p. 109, who references (p. 118, nn. 60 and 61) the following studies: B. Crawford, *Scandinavian Scotland* (Leicester, 1987), p. 40; J. Graham-Campbell and C. Batey, *Vikings in Scotland: An Archaeological Survey* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. 24; O. A. Owen, 'The Scar Boat Burial - and the Missing Decades of the Early Viking Age in Orkney and Shetland', in J. Adams and K. Holman (eds.), *Scandinavia and Europe 800-1350: Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 3-33, at p. 29.
[8] For which see Chapter 3.

> The habitual appearance of vikings in the Bay of Biscay[1] during the first three decades of the ninth century suggests an early entrenched presence along its shores. This would have counteracted the need for a (semi-) annual voyage from southern Scandinavia or the Irish Sea region, which would have taken over a week to accomplish under the most advantageous conditions - whilst being subject to beleaguerment by intermediate Carolingian coastal defences.[2]

In principle I have nothing against this idea and it is certainly plausible, but until there is any new archaeological evidence which might support it the suggestion remains just speculation.

In the next chapter we examine the sack of Nantes in 843 and the subsequent overwintering on some Aquitanian island. One thing that is intriguing is that after this sack, at least according to Prudentius of Troyes, the Northmen had 'brought their households over from the mainland and decided to winter there in something like a permanent settlement', 'Ad postremum insulam quondam ingress, conuectis a continenti domibus, hiemare uelut perpetuis sedibus statuerunt'.[3] If *domibus* here means their families, as is usually thought, then this seems to suggest that they had left their families somewhere on a nearby 'mainland' before they had attacked Nantes. This, however, does not necessarily suggest that they had previously had some sort of semi-permanent base in the vicinity; it more suggests that having come originally from the Seine and likely made an attack on the *emporium* of Quentovic and on southern England in 842 the Northmen involved, who seem to have been led by a chieftain called Oskar, had overwintered somewhere (perhaps in southern Brittany) from 842 to 843 and that they had left their families there before making the attack on Nantes. Whatever the case may have been, 843 is quite late for any discussion of 'viking' bases in Aquitaine, we simply do not presently know if the Northmen had established temporary overwintering camps in Aquitaine (writ large) in the previous decades.

We could leave this matter here but the present thesis is about connections and so we must *perforce* delve a little deeper even if this leads us into an examination of some obscure and seemingly distant events.

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[1] Should we really extend the Bay of Biscay all the way to the Loire?
[2] C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs*, pp. 109-10.
[3] *Annals of Saint-Bertin* [hereafter *AB*] *s.a.* 843: *Annales de Saint-Bertin (avec une introduction et des notes par Léon Levillain)*, eds. F. Grat, J. Vielliard, and S. Clémencet (Paris, 1964), p. 44; *Annals of St-Bertin, Ninth-Century Histories, volume 1*, trans. J. L. Nelson (Manchester, 1991), p. 56.

One theory is that these Northmen who had come to Bouin were in fact those led by one or both of the two sons of the former Danish king Godfrid who had been forced to leave Denmark.[1] The *Royal Frankish Annals* tell us that in 819:

> Harioldus quoque iussu imperatoris ad naves suas per Abodritos reductus in patriam quasi regnum ibi accepturus navigavit. Cui se duo ex filiis Godofridi quasi una cum eo regnum habituri sociasse dicuntur, aliis duobus patria expulsis; sed hoc dolo factum putatur.[2]

> On the emperor's [Louis the Pious's] order Heriold [Harald Klak] was taken to his ship by the Obodrites and sailed back to his homeland to take over the kingdom. Two of the sons of Godofrid are said to have made an alliance with him to share the throne; two others were driven out of the country. But this is believed to have been done by trickery.[3]

In 1923 Jan de Vies argued that the relatively small fleet which had appeared in 820, first in Flanders then on the Seine and eventually in the bay of Bourgneuf, was actually commanded by the two 'sons of Godfrid' who 'had been driven out' of Denmark in late 819, and indeed as an act of vengeance (*wraakoefening*).[4] When this perhaps heretical thought has ever occurred to later historians (and never referencing Jan de Vries) it has been rejected but usually on very weak or unstated grounds.[5]

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[1] For King Godfrid and his at least five sons see, just as an introduction, the extensive discussions in V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation*; S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden. Über die Schwierigkeit der Interpretation von frühmittelalterlichen Quellen zur Geschichte Dänemarks*, unpublished M.Phil thesis (University of Vienna, 2008); W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*.

[2] *ARF s.a.* 819: ed. Kurze, p. 152.

[3] *RFA s.a.* 819: trans. Scholz, p. 106.

[4] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 115: 'Wanneer dan in 820 een vloot van 13 schepen op de Vlaamsche kust verschijnt, kunnen we met grond vermoeden, dat dit een wraakoefening is van de beide verdreven Deensche vorstenzonen. Hun optreden is niet schitterend; in Vlaanderen doen ze een paar hutten in vlammen opgaan; dan stevenen ze naar de Seine, waar zij vijf man verhezen; eindelijk behalen zij wat grootere buit in Aquitanië. Wij zien hieruit, dat de kustwacht haar taak, althans in het Noordelijk deel van West-Franken nog behoorlijk vervulde, al is het afslaan van dertien schepen nu niet bepaald een werk, waar groote krachtsinspanning voor noodig is. Dat de wikingen het plaatsje Bouin aan de golf van Bourgneuf geheel konden verwoesten, doet veronderstellen, dat hier de verdediging van de kust zeer slap gevoerd werd; we moeten daarbij in aanmerking nemen, dat het de kust is tegenover het eiland Noirmoutiers, dat zoo vroeg reeds door de wikirigen tot steunpunt werd gekozen. In deze jaren hooren we van herhaalde aanvallen op het aldaar gevestigde klooster St. Filibert.' It may be that this idea of an act of vengeance (*wraakoefening*) is pushing matters a little far; who was this vengeance meant to have been against? If this expedition and associated raids was undertaken by the two expelled sons of Godfrid is this not more an early example of the many piratical raids made throughout the ninth century by royal or semi-royal Northmen who had been excluded from any royal power back home?

[5] Referring to the report in the *Royal Frankish Annals* in 820, in her excellent dissertation Sandra Polzer says: 'Der Annalist hielt sich ähnlich wie bei dem Wikingerzug von 810 nach Friesland zurück, was die Herkunft dieser Wikinger betrifft. Er bezeichnete sie nicht als *Dani* oder vermutete die Söhne Godofrids als Anführer. Stattdessen verwendete er die zurückhaltende Formulierung *de Nordmannia*': S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden*, p. 133. Also referring to the same events Volker Helton, says: 'Im Jahre 820 kam es zu einem Ereignis, das zwar mit Skandinavien in Verbindung zu bringen ist, aber wohl nicht mit den dänischen Thronkämpfen': V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation*, p. 97. Polzer's argument does not entirely convince because during this

At least in part de Vries's suggestion rises or falls on a particular interpretation of immediately subsequent events involving Harald Klak, the Danish 'sons of Godfrid', the Obodrites and the emperor Louis the Pious, which is all a very complex subject.[1] De Vries's argument is essentially that after the attack on Bouin the two sons of Godfrid who had fled, or more accurately been expelled, from Denmark had returned and acted in concert with the rebellious Obodrite prince Ceadrag, although they do not seem to have achieved much.[2] The *Royal Frankish Annals* tell us that in 821:

> De parte Danorum omnia quieta eo anno fuerunt, et Harioldus a filiis Godofridi in societatem regni receptus; quae res tranquillum inter eos huius temporis statum fecisse putatur. Sed quia Ceadragus Abodritorum princeps perfidiae et cuiusdam cum filiis Godofridi factae societatis notabatur, Sclaomir emulus eius in patriam remittitur; qui, cum in Saxoniam venisset, aegritudine decubuit perceptoque baptismi sacramento defunctus est.[3]

> Everything was quiet on the Danish front in this year, and Heriold was received as partner in the rule by the sons of Godofrid. This is believed to have caused the peaceful relations among them at this time. But since Ceadrag, prince of the Obodrites, was charged with treachery and with having entered into an alliance with the sons of Godofrid, his rival Sclaomir was sent back to his homeland. When Sclaomir came to Saxony, he fell ill and died after receiving the sacrament of baptism.[4]

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period the *Royal Frankish Annals* several times use the expression *de Nordmannia* etc. when very specifically referring to Danes such as Harald Klak and the sons of Godfrid; see for example *ARF* 823: ed. Kurze, pp. 162-63: 'Venerat et Harioldus de Nordmannia auxilium petens contra filios Godofridi [...] qui et causam filiorum Godofridi et statum totius regni Nordmannorum [...]; *ARF s.a.* 827: ed. Kurze, p. 173: 'Interea reges Danorum, filii videlicet Godofridi, Herioldum de consortio regni eicientes Nordmannorum finibus excedere conpulerunt.' For one very useful discussion of the uses of the terms *Dani* and *Nordmanni* see I. Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the *gens Danorum*', in I. Garipzanov, P. Geary and P. Urbańczyk (eds.), *Franks, Northmen and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe* (Turnhout, 2008), pp. 113-44.

[1] For the history of all these events involving Franks, Danes and Obodrites see in the first instance V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation*; R. Ernst, 'Karolingische Nordostpolitik zur Zeit Ludwigs des Frommen', in C. Goehrke, E. Oberländer, and D. Wojtecki (eds.), *Festschrift für Manfred Hellmann zum 65. Geburtstag: Östliches Europa. Spiegel der Geschichte* (Wiesbaden, 1977), pp. 81-107; *idem*, *Die Nordwestslaven und das fränkische Reich: Beobachtungen zur Geschichte ihrer Nachbarschaft und zur Elbe als nordöstlicher Reichsgrenze bis in die Zeit Karls des Großen* (Berlin, 1976); S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden*.

[2] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 115: 'Het volgend jaar zien wij de verdreven zonen van Godfrid ageeren onder de oproerige Obotriten, maar voorloopig schijnen zij niet veel daarmee bereikt te hebben.'

[3] *ARF s.a.* 821: ed. Kurze, pp. 156-57.

[4] *RFA s.a.* 821: trans. Scholz, p. 110.

Ceadrag had become sole ruler of the Obodrites in early 819 and his rival Sclaomir was condemned to exile.[1] But what are we to make of this report of 821 in the *Royal Frankish Annals*? The first part would certainly indicate that via some route news had arrived that some sort peace had been made between Harald Klak and the 'sons of Godfrid'.[2] But the second part is more problematic. Which 'sons of Godfrid' had Ceadrag treacherously 'entered into an alliance with'? This report certainly does suggest, as Volker Helton says, a continuing power struggle within the Obodrite realm which led to Sclaomir being recalled although he died on the way home.[3] The general view, if there is one, is that Ceadrag's treachery had been allying with the two 'sons of Godfrid' who had remained after 819 when their two other brothers had been driven out of the country. But in essence Jan de Vries's argument, although he perhaps does not bring it out fully, is that those sons of Godfrid with whom Ceadrag had allied were the two banished sons.[4] This idea he suggests is supported by the facts of the next year, 822, when:

> At Frankfurt he [Louis the Pious] convoked a general assembly, and with the magnates whom he had ordered to appear there he took care, as usual, of all that pertained to the welfare of the eastern parts of his kingdom. At this assembly he received embassies and presents from all the East Slavs, that is, Obodrites, Sorbs, Wilzi, Bohemians, Moravians, and Praedenecenti, and from the Avars living in Pannonia. Embassies from Nordmannia were also at this assembly, from Heriold as well as from the sons of Godfrid.[5]

In the opinion of all historians, including Jan de Vries, the 'embassies' of the 'sons of Godfrid' who attended this assembly were those of the two sons of Godfrid who had not had to leave but who had reached an accommodation with Harald Klak in 819. I too would agree with this. De Vries says quite rightly that these embassies were clearly not those of the expelled princes who

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[1] *ARF s.a.* 819: ed. Kurze, p. 149; *RFA s.a.* 819: trans. Scholz, p. 105: 'Sclaomir, king of the Obodrites, was taken to Aachen by the commanders of the Saxon border and the emperor's envoys in command of the army of the Saxons and the East Franks. This army had been sent beyond the Elbe in the same year to take revenge for Sclaomir's treachery. The nobles of his people, who had been told to appear at the same time, charged him with many crimes. When Sclaomir was unable to refute the charges by a reasonable defense, he was condemned to exile and his kingdom given to Caedrag, son of Thrasco.'

[2] S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden*, p. 133: 'Die Nachrichten aus dem dänischen Raum hatte man anscheinend über einige Umwege erhalten. Die Formulierung *putatur* - es wurde angenommen - deutet an, dass man nur aufgrund der Ruhe seitens der *Dani* vermutete, dass ein Frieden zwischen Harald Klak und den Söhnen Godofrids geschlossen worden war.'

[3] V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation*, p. 98, my translation.

[4] A slightly similar idea is proposed by S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 1: 'At first sight the annal entry for 821 appears to repeat the entry for 819, in that it reports that Harald was now accepted as co-ruler by the sons of Godfrid. Perhaps the solution is that these were the two sons who had left Denmark two years earlier, who had now returned and buried their differences with Harald.' This unpublished book is based on Coupland's doctoral thesis but with some changes. I thank Simon Coupland for letting me have this draft book and his permission to quote from it.

[5] *RFA s.a.* 822: trans. Scholz, pp. 111-12.

dwelt with the Obotrites because they would certainly not have received a favourable reception from Louis.[1]

Indeed, the Obodrite prince Ceadrag does not even seem to have attended the assembly at Frankfurt in 822 because we are told that in May of 823 another assembly was summoned by the emperor Louis at the same place,[2] during which we hear that:

> Accusatus est in eodem placito apud imperatorem Ceadragus Abodritorum princeps, quod se erga partem Francorum parum fideliter ageret et ad imperatoris praesentiam iam diu venire dissimulasset. Propter quod ad eum legati directi sunt, cum quibus ille iterum quosdam ex primoribus gentis suae ad imperatorem misit; perque illorum verba promisit, se ad proximum hiemis tempus ad illius praesentiam esse venturum.[3]

This Bernhard Scholz translates quite reasonably, but not at all literally, into English as follows:

> During the assembly at Frankfurt, Ceadrag, prince of the Obodrites, was accused in the emperor's presence of infidelity to the Franks and of having failed to appear before the emperor for a long time. Envoys were sent to him on that account. With these envoys Ceadrag sent back some nobles of his people to the emperor. Through them he promised to appear before the emperor next winter.[4]

I tend to prefer Sandra Polzer's German translation:

> Auch der Abodritenfürst Ceadragus wurde auf diesem Reichstag vor dem Kaiser verklagt, dass er gegen die Franken nicht gerade treu sei und es schon lange versäumt habe, vor dem Kaiser zu erscheinen: es wurden daher Gesandte an ihn abgeordnet, mit denen er

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[1] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 115-16: 'Er treedt echter in de verhouding tusschen Harald en zijn mederegenten een kentering in; dit blijkt daaruit, dat in 822 een tweevoudig Deensch gezantschap bij Lodewijk te Frankfort verschijnt, een gezonden door Harald en een ander door de zonen van Godfrid. Het is duidelijk, dat deze niet de verdreven vorsten zijn, die zich bij de Obotriten ophielden - deze zouden zeker geen gunstig onthaal bij Lodewijk gevonden hebben.'

[2] *ARF s.a.* 823: ed. Kurze, p. 160: 'DCCCXXIII. Mense Maio conventus in eodem loco habitus […]', p. 160; *RFA s.a.* 823: trans. Scholz, p. 112: 'An assembly was held at the same place in May […].

[3] *ARF s.a.* 823: ed. Kurze, p. 160.

[4] *RFA s.a.* 823: trans. Scholz, p. 112. Ceadrag did actually appear at the royal assembly at Compiègne in November of 823: 'Cedragus Abodritorum princeps pollicitationibus suis adhibens fidem cum quibusdam primoribus populi sui Compendium venit dilatique per tot annos adventus sui rationem coram imperatore non inprobabiliter reddidit. Qui licet in quibusdam causis culpabilis appareret, tamen propter merita parentum suorum non solum inpunitus, verum muneribus donatus ad regnum redire permissus est': *ARF* 823: ed. Kurze, p. 162; *RFA s.a.* 823: trans. Scholz, p. 114.

dann wieder einige Große seines Volks an den Kaiser zurücksandte und durch sie das Versprechen gab, im nächsten Winter vor ihm zu erscheinen.[1]

The infidelity that Ceadrag was accused of in his absence is clearly that of the year before when he had 'entered into an alliance with the sons of Godfrid'.

In summary, and in my opinion, the idea that the two expelled sons of Godfrid had sought sanctuary with the Obodrite prince Ceadrag after 819, as suggested by Jan de Vries, is perhaps somewhat supported by the annalistic evidence, but that they had also conducted the expedition that led to Bouin in the bay of Bourgneuf is just conjecture. It may have been so but it might also not have been. Having said this, if we reject this idea *tout court* then we are just left with a conception of an amorphous and typically unidentifiable group of Scandinavian pirates making this journey.

Whatever the true circumstances may have been regarding their origin - which I insist must have been somewhere in Scandinavia - what had attracted these Northmen to try their luck in Bouin? Certainly, it was more poorly defended than the Seine,[2] but what exactly did the Northmen expect to be able to pillage there? *Bouin* was at that time a low-lying salt marsh island which lay just to the east of Noirmoutier. The shallow waterways surrounding the island have since silted up and Bouin is now part of the mainland. The preponderant economic activity on Bouin at the time and well into the future was the production of salt by evaporation.[3] There was no monastery on the island and thus this salt production was possibly carried on by the type of independent producers described by the French historian of the salt trade Olivier Bruand rather than by monks as was the case on Noirmoutier. It should be mentioned, however, that just opposite Bouin on the salt marsh mainland was the port of *Furcae* (Furca/La Fourche) which served the nearby *villa* of *Ampennum* (Ampan, now Beauvoir-sur-Mer) where *salines* were already established in the seventh century; these, along with some other estates, had been granted to Philibert in 677 by Ansoald, the Bishop of Poitiers, with the approval of the Frankish king Dagobert II, as a source of income for the new monastery on Noirmoutier.[4] The relevant part of this donation reads:

[1] S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden*, p. 134.
[2] S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 52.
[3] See T. Gisbert, *Bouin, isle de mer au milieu des terres* (La Talbotière, 2003).
[4] See J.-M. Picard, 'Aquitaine et Irlande dans le Haut Moyen Age', in J.-M. Picard (ed.), *Aquitaine and Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 17-30, at pp. 24-25.

> I, Ansoald, bishop of the town of Poitiers [...] give to my brother Philibert, whom I have established as father of the monastery on the island of Her, a *villa* situated at Ampan on the edge of the sea, with its houses, its buildings, its vineyards, its fields, its inhabitants and its servants of both sexes and its *salines*.[1]

820 was not the first time since 799 that the Northmen had raided around the mouth of the Loire in the bay of Bourgneuf. We can confidently infer that there must have been several further raids on Noirmoutier in the years before. In March 819, Arnulf, the abbot of Noirmoutier, received a charter from Emperor Louis the Pious granting the new monastic *villa* he had *earlier* had built at Déas,[2] just south of Nantes in the *pays d'Herbauge*, the right to cut a canal across the main road to bring water from the nearby river Boulogne to the new monastery, on condition that the community also build a bridge to cross this canal.[3] This satellite monastery became known as Saint-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu and eventually eclipsed and replaced its mother monastery. The charter makes it quite clear why the new monastery at Déas had been founded: according to the abbot Arnulf there had already been frequent barbarian incursions which had ravaged the monastery on Noirmoutier.[4] Déas was a place to which the Noirmoutier monks could escape during the summers to avoid the incursions of the Northmen, which we are told they later did every year, taking all the movable valuables of the monastery on Noirmoutier with them.[5] What the charter of 819 also very clearly shows is that a new monastery at Déas had been founded relatively recently, possibly even as early as 814 or 815. Thus, it is certain that there must have been some raids on Noirmoutier in the years before 819, indeed possibly even before the first establishment of the small new monastery at Déas as well.

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[1] My translation. 'Ego Ansoaldus Pictavensis urbis episcopus [...] fratris nostri Philiberti abbatis, que in insola Herio pater monasterii constituimus [...]. Villam Ampenno sitam in litore maris, cum domibus, edificiis, vineis, agris, acolanis, mancipiis utriusque sexus cum salinis vel omni compendium in se habente': L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 59 (1898), pp. 233-61, at pp. 239-40; E.-J. Tardif, 'Les Chartes mérovingiennes de Noirmoutier', *Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger*, 22 (1898), pp. 763-90, at pp. 783-86.

[2] The villa of Déas was one of those originally granted to Philibert by Bishop Ansoald of Poitiers in 677, see L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 59 (Paris, 1898), pp. 233-61, at pp. 240-42; E.-J. Tardif, 'Les Chartes mérovingiennes de Noirmoutier', pp. 783-86; R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXVI, n. 2.

[3] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, p. XXV and Act 1, p. 107.

[4] 'Monasterio sancti Filiberti, quod est situm in insula quae dicitur Aeri [Noirmoutier], propter incursiones barbarorum qui frequenter ipsum monasterium depopulantur, foras in pago qui dictitur Erbadellicus, in loco [cujus] vocabulum est Deas, per nostrum consensum atque adjutorium, novum monasterium edificasse [...]': R. Poupardin, ed., *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, pp. XXV-XXVI. For the full text: *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina* [hereafter *PL*], 104, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1851), col. 1089; *Regesta imperii*, I: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern, 751–918* [hereafter *Regesta imperii*], eds. J. F. Böhmer and E. Mühlbacher (Innsbruck, 1908), no. 687.

[5] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXVI and n. 5.

More raids and defensive measures in the 820s and 830s

But the threat of further raids had not gone away because sometime in the late 820s Hilbod, who had become abbot of Saint Philibert's monastery on Noirmoutier in 824 or 825,[1] started to fortify it against potential future attacks by the Northmen.[2] Vogel commented: 'The continual threats caused the abbot of Noirmoutier, Hilbod, to protect the cloister with strong surrounding walls.'[3]

In 830 it is likely that there was another attack on Noirmoutier. In the entry for this year the *Chronicon Aquitanicum* (*Chronicle of Aquitaine*) merely states that the monks left the island in June - for Déas no doubt.[4] But borrowing the *Chronicon's* words[5] the early eleventh-century French monk and 'historian' of Aquitaine Ademar of Chabannes in his *Chronicle* adds not only

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[1] *The Annals of Angoulême* [hereafter *AAng*] give the installation of Hilbod under the year 825: 'Hilbodus abbas efficitur' (*Annales* Engolimenses, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 16 (Hanover, 1859), pp. 485-87, at p. 485). Falco's later *Chronique de Tournus* (see Falco: *Chronicon Trenorchiense*, in *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, ed. Poupardin. pp. 71-106, at p. 82) says that Arnulf died in the eleventh year after the death of Charlemagne ('undecimo anno post obitum magni Karoli') and was succeeded by Hilbod, which seems to place Hilbod's abbacy in 824 or maybe 825. Hilbod was certainly already the abbot of Noirmoutier by 18 May 826 as a confirmation charter was issued in his favour by Pippin I on that date: see *Recueil des actes de Pépin Ier et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (814-848)* [hereafter *RAP*], eds. L. Levillain and M. Prou (Paris, 1908), pp. 19-21; R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, Act 2, p. 108: 'Pépin I, roi d'Aquitaine, à la requête de l'abbé Hilbod, confirme le précepte de Louis le Pieux accordant au monastère de Saint-Philibert l'exemption de tonlieu pour six bateaux sur la Loire, l'Allier, le Cher et la Dordogne.' I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 93, says 824.

[2] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, p. XXVII. L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 37, place the building of this 'castrum' in 828 or 829. I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 93, places the construction 'entre 824 et 830', the dates of Hilbod's abbacy. Cf. Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, I, Prologue, ed. Poupardin, p. 25; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 94: 'Comme les soudaines et intempestives incursions des Normands dont j'ai parlé étaient incessantes, le susdit abbé Hilbod qui, pour dissuader ces hommes perfides, avait fait construire un camp retranché [*castrum*] dans l'île […].' This earlier decision to build a *castrum* around the monastery on Noirmoutier is confimed by a charter dated 2 August 830 granted by Louis the Pious and Lothar I at the royal palace at Servais (dep. Aisne) to where Abbot Hilbod had travelled; see Charter of 2 August 830: *PL* 104, col. 1183; L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', p. 246; *Regesta imperii*, no. 875. This charter is discussed more below but for our purpose here given that the *castrum* was constructed sometime during the second half of the 820s may certainly suggest that there had been 'frequent summer incursions' in the area before this date, incursions that Ermentarius says (*ibid.*) were conducted by 'these ferocious people' who 'se retrouvèrent très souvant au port de cette île [Noirmoutier] pour ensuite la dévaster sauvagement'. Whether these Scandinavian 'incursions' into, or at least presence on, Noirmoutier were only limited to that on some Aquitanian islands in 820, as already discussed above, may be doubted, if so, this could certainly suggest those raids occurred before 819 and maybe even other incursions between 819 and the second half of the 820s. Finally, when was the final savage devastation of the *portus* of Noirmoutier meant to have taken place?

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 63, my translation. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 168: 'A charter issued to Abbot Hilbod of Noirmoutier in 830 reveals that a stronghold ('castrum') had been built around the monastery as a result of repeated Viking raids on the island.'

[4] *ChrAquit* 830, p. 252: 'Herio insula a generali monachorum habitatione destituitur, mense junio.' The *Annals of Angoulême* say the same thing but give the year as 834 (*AAng* 834, ed. Pertz, p. 485), mistakenly according to J. Lair, *Études critiques sur divers textes des Xe et XIe siècles*, II: *'Historia d'Adémar de Chabannes* (Paris, 1899), p. 105, n. 1, and R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, p. XXVIII, n. 1.

[5] The first part of Ademar's *Chronicon* or *Historia* is borrowed at its core from the *Annals of Angoulême* and the Limousin version called the *Chronicle* of *Aquitaine*; see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. XVI. The *Chronicle* of *Aquitaine* bears marks of Ademar's own additions.

that the *Normanni* had burnt the Noirmoutier monastery but, in manuscript C,[1] that their ships had come 'ad mare Aquitanicum', 'to the Aquitanian sea', because they feared the Saxons![2] Where Ademar got this information regarding the fear of the Saxons is unknown; did he just make it up?[3] As far as we know there was no attack by the Northmen on the English (if that is what 'Saxons' means) in 830 or immediately before. The closest Scandinavian presence in England we know of was in 835 when 'heathen men raided across Sheppey'.[4] If Ademar's information has any worth it may perhaps more reasonably be linked to the 'affair of Harald [Klak]' and the rumoured planned invasion of Saxony by the Northmen (which ultimately did not happen) reported in the *Royal Frankish Annals* in 828-829.[5] Ademar reported these Saxon-related and other events dating to 829 immediately before the supposed raid on Noirmoutier, which took place according to him in 'the next year', i.e. implicitly and explicitly in 830,[6] and his further statement that the raid in 835 (to be discussed below) took place five years later fits with this. Vogel nevertheless argued for 834 rather than 830 for the date of this raid,[7] suggesting that the raid is linked in the three sources with the death in 834 of Count Odo of Orléans at the hands of Count Lambert of Nantes,[8] but the evidence from the sources is far from clear as to chronology. I tend to agree with Jules Lair that the raid happened in 830 rather than in 834, although the latter date is certainly possible.

A raid in June 830 could well have been the trigger for the monks to ask Louis the Pious for various defensive fiscal exemptions which he granted them in August of the same year. In a diploma dated 2 August 830 Louis and his son Lothar I granted the monks, lay people, and slaves of the monastery exemption from public service on condition that they pay six pounds of silver yearly to the royal *fisc*.[9] The reason for this exemption was, as the charter clearly tells us, that all the people of the newly fortified monastery were needed for its defence and protection against persistent Scandinavian attacks.[10]

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[1] Using Jules Lair's lettering. The various texts are discussed in detail in *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*. ed. P. Bourgain *et al* (Turnhout, 1999).
[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, I. III, chap. 16, p. 131; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 104-6.
[3] A question asked by J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 104, n. 2.
[4] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* [hereafter *ASC*] 835: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, ed. and trans. M. Swanton (London, 2001), pp. 62, 63
[5] *ARF s.a.* 828-829: ed. Kurze, pp. 175-77; *RFA s.a.* 828-829: trans. Scholz, pp. 123-24.
[6] *Adémar de Chabanne. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, I. III, chap. 16, pp. 130-31; J. Lair, *Etudes critiques*, p. 104.
[7] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 68 and n. 3.
[8] Cf. *AB* 834: ed. Grat, p. 13; trans. Nelson, p. 30; *Annals of Xanten* [hereafter *AX*] 834: *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, ed. B. von Simson, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 12 (Hanover, 1909), p. 9.
[9] Diploma of 2 August 830: 'a cunctis publicis obsequiis ad nos pertinentibus, donis seu cunctis operibus publicis ac palatinis': *PL*, 104, col. 1183; L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', p. 246; *Regesta imperii*, no. 875.
[10] *Ibid*: 'Sed cum idem locus piratarum incursionibus creberrime coepisset infestari, et ipsi monachi multas incommoditates atque molestias propter hoc jugiter paterentur, eo quod omni anno ipsa necessitas eos compulisset

Ermentarius, who was a monk of the monastery on Noirmoutier from sometime in the 830s, wrote in the prologue to the first book of his *Miracles of Saint Philibert* that the monks left Noirmoutier for their new monastery at Déas returning when winter weather made it difficult for the raiders to disembark.[1] It is not clear exactly from when this annual summer exodus to Déas started. It might have been in the 820s or even as late as 830. Poupardin thinks it was 830,[2] however the charter of 2 August of that year says that the monks moved out (to Déas) every year from spring until the end of autumn, which certainly suggests that they had been doing so for some years before 830. Delhommeau and Bouhier are convinced that this annual summer retreat to Déas started in 819 and only came to an end in 836.[3]

The other inhabitants of the island seem not to have joined the exodus. Poupardin sees the inhabitants of the island retreating behind the walls of the *castrum* each summer while the Northmen pillaged at will in the locality, which would, he says, explain why the fortifications were not burnt by the raiders until 846.[4]

Thus, all the evidence shows that from about the second half of the second decade of the ninth century until 830 (or even perhaps 834) the Northmen had come to Noirmoutier and the bay of Bourgneuf on a pretty regular basis.

In late summer 835 the Northmen were yet again back in the area. In June of this year Northmen had plundered parts of Frisia followed by a 'second' attack on the important *emporium* of Dorestad,[5] and, as mentioned earlier, in 835 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us

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eundem locum ab inicio verni usque ad finem autumni temporis illos deserere et quasi desolatum sine divino officio relinquere, et omne ministerium ecclesiasticum vel universam monasterii suppellectilem foras cogere cum gravi dispendio et labore devehere [...].' S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 168: 'A charter issued to Abbot Hilbod of Noirmoutier in 830 reveals that a stronghold ('castrum') had been built around the monastery as a result of repeated Viking raids on the island. In the charter Louis the Pious granted that a number of the monastery's vassals should be freed from all other public duties in order to provide a permanent guard for the stronghold.'

[1] Ermentarius, *De translationibus et miraculis Sancti Philiberti Libri II* [hereafter *Miracles of Saint Philibert*], in R. Poupardin (ed.), *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert (Noirmoutier, Grandlieu, Tournus)* (Paris, 1905), book I, prologue, pp. 23-24: 'aestivo quippe tempore, quo navigandi arridet temperies, Deas monasterium quod ob hoc fuerat constructum, petentes, hiemis tantommodo tempore Herum insulam repetebant'; *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, trans. L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier (Noirmoutier, 1999), p. 93: 'Profitant des facilités de navigation qu'offre l'été, ils se rendaient au monastère de Déas construit pour refuge et revenaient seulement l'hiver à Noirmoutier.'

[2] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, pp. XXVII-XXVIII, basing his opinion on the 830 report in the *Chronicon Aquitanicum*.

[3] L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 18, and n. 12, p. 25: 'Il n'y pas de doute que le déménagement de Noirmoutier à Déas commença dès 819, s'accéléra après 830 et qu'il eut un caractère définif le début de 836 […].'

[4] R. Poupardin, *Monuments de l'histoire*, p. XXVII.

[5] *AX* 835: ed. von Simson, pp. 9-10: 'Interim autem iterum pagani partes Frisiae, et interfecta est de paganis non minima multitude. Et interim pradaverunt Dorestatum'; trans. Coupland: 'Meanwhile, as this was going on, heathens fell upon the celebrated trading settlement at Dorestad, and laid it waste with savage cruelty'. *AB* 835: ed. Grat, p. 18; trans. Nelson, p. 33: 'But while he [Louis the Pious] was still at that assembly [at Tramoyes near Lyons in June], the Northmen fell on Dorestad in a second assault, laid it waste and looted it savagely. The Emperor, very angry, reached Aachen and made arrangements for effective defence of the coasts.'

that in this year: 'Here heathen men raided across Sheppey' in the Thames estuary in south-eastern England.[1] Whether the raids in Frisia including on Dorestad and on Sheppey were undertaken by the same fleet of Northmen is not known, they may well have been, but possibly it was some or all of these same Northmen who then moved on to Noirmoutier where they landed at the end of August in just nine ships in a bay called *Conca* (*Concha*).[2] *Concha* was Noirmoutier's *portus* and is repeatedly mentioned by Ermentarius, but where was it situated? One prevalent view is that it was on the coast at the north-western tip of the island on the curving bay of *La Linière* between *Le Vieil* and *L'Herbaudièr*e, which is called *La Conche des* (*aux*) *Normands* today and is very close to all the *salines* and the monastery and *castrum* - which were on the site of the present-day church of Saint-Philbert and the adjoining château in Noirmoutier-en-l'Île.[3] The other opinion is that 'Conche' is actually the north-eastern bay/cove (*anse*) situated immediately next to the site of the *castrum* and later château at present-day Noirmoutier-en-l'Île and that it was here that the *portus* of Noirmoutier was to be found since the arrival of Philibert and the founding of the monastery.[4]

In 834 and in the subsequent three years there were Danish attacks in Frisia.[5] It is generally believed that at least some of these attacks were carried out by two nephews of the former Danish king Harald Klak, namely Harald the Younger and his brother Rorik.[6] Many historians have suggested, mistakenly in my view, that it was Louis the Pious's son Lothar I who had incited them to do so as part of his fight with his father and brothers for the future inheritance of the still united Frankish realm.[7]

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[1] *ASC* 835: ed. and trans. Swanton, MS A, p. 62, MS E, p. 63.

[2] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, II: ed. Poupardin, chap. 11, pp. 66-67; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 137-38.

[3] See for example É. Boutin, *La baie de Bretagne et sa contrebande*, pp. 28-29; *idem*, 'Les moines et le sel de la Baie'; O. Jeanne-Rose, 'Ports, marchands et marchandises. Aspects économiques du littoral poitevin (IXe-XIIe siècles)', *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 5. 5 (1996), pp. 115-142, at p. 122, n. 1; *idem*, 'L'histoire économique du Centre-Ouest atlantique d'après la littérature hagiographique (VIIIe-XIIe siècle)', *Revue Historique du Centre-Ouest*, 6 (2007), pp. 137-64, at p. 148 and n. 76. This local localisation may also be influenced by the nearby site of *La Blanche* where a Cistercian monastery was founded in 1215; for which see H. Maheux, *Yeu et Noirmoutier, Iles de Vendée*, *Cahiers du Patrimoine*, 34 (Nantes, 1994).

[4] See for example I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 92, 353; L. Delhommeau and C. Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 58, and p. 61, n. 45.

[5] *AX*: ed. von Simson; *AB*: ed. Grat; *ARF*: ed. Kurze; *s.a.* 834-837.

[6] S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 90-91; D. J. Henstra, *Friese graafschappen tussen Zwin en Wezer. Een overzicht van grafelijkheid in middeleeuws Frisia (ca. 700-1200)* (Assen, 2012), p. 42; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 75.

[7] Cf. W. C. Braat, 'Les Vikings au Pays de Frise', *Annales de Normandie*, 4. 3 (1954), pp. 219-27, at pp. 222-23; N. Lund, 'Allies of God or man? The Viking expansion in a European perspective', *Viator*, 20 (1989), pp. 45-59, at pp. 47-50; *idem*, 'L'an 845 et les relations franco-danoises', p. 31; D. J. Henstra, *Friese graafschappen tussen Zwin en Wezer*, p. 35; S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 90, 92; J. L. Nelson, 'The Frankish Empire', pp. 23-24; *eadem*, *The Annals of St-Bertin* (Manchester, 1991), p. 51, n. 9; P. H. Sawyer, 'The Age of the Vikings, and Before', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, pp. 1-18, at p. 9.

Although the precise timing of the attacks on Frisia and on Noirmoutier in 835 tends to suggest they were connected - the attack on Noirmoutier coming just a couple of months after those in Frisia - it is also conceivable that the raiders of Noirmoutier had come from Ireland where the Northmen had made attempts at settlement along the coasts of Mayo and Galway from 812, and where they used small islands for protection.[1] The first more permanent Scandinavian bases in Ireland, called *longphuirt* (sing. *longphort*), are first mentioned in the records in 840 at Lough Neagh and in 841 at *Duiblinn* (Dublin) and *Linn Duachaill* (Annagassan on Dundalk Bay).[2] The long-standing and frequent trading relations between Ireland and the bay of Bourgneuf will be discussed later.

To return to the raid on Noirmoutier in 835: On 20 August, the day of the festival of Saint Philibert, the Northmen who had landed at the port of *Concha* were heading on foot for the monastery when they were confronted by the Frankish count Rainald of Herbauge at the head of a troop of horsemen.[3] The outcome of this engagement is uncertain. The local *Annals of Angoulême* simply say that Rainald fought with the Northmen on the island of 'Hero'.[4] Ademar of Chabannes said that Rainald had fought the Northmen but had fled.[5] The Noirmoutier monk Ermentarius tells a miraculous story of a great victory: the Franks lost only one man and some horses, while the Northmen's losses amounted to 484 men.[6] On balance despite his seemingly

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[1] Cf. C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6.

[2] Cf. J. Sheehan, 'The *Longphort* in Viking Age Ireland', *Acta Archaeologica*, 79 (2008), pp. 282-95, at p. 282; E. P. Kelly, 'The *longphort* in Viking-Age Ireland: the archaeological evidence', in H. B. Clarke and R. Johnson (eds.), *The Vikings in Ireland and Beyond*, p. 55; C. Downham, 'Viking Camps in Ninth-century Ireland: Sources, Locations and Interactions', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin 10* (Dublin, 2010), pp. 93-125; C. Etchingham, 'Vikings in Annagassan: the evidence of the annals and the wider context', in H. B. Clarke and R. Johnson (eds.), *The Vikings in Ireland and Beyond*, pp. 117-28.

[3] Cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 69; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 8; *idem*, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 62.

[4] *AAng* 835, p. 485: 'Hero insula Rainaldus 13. Kal. Septembris cum Normannis congreditur.' The *Chronicle of Aquitaine* (*Chronicon Aquitanicum*), which bears the mark of Ademar of Chabannes, adds Rainald's position as count of Herbauge: *ChrAquit* 835, p. 252: 'Rainardus, Arbatilicensis comes, XIII. Kalendas Septembris cum Northmannis dimicavit in Herio insula.'

[5] Ademar of Chabannes, *Chronicle*: *Adémar de Chabannes: Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, I. III, chap. 16, p. 131: 'Rainoldus, comes Arbatilicensis, mense septembri, cum Nortmannis in Herio insula dimicat et fugatus est.' This is the only time we hear of a supposed flight of Count Rainald.

[6] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, II, ed. Poupardin, chap 11, pp. 66-67; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 137-38. Although she seems to agree with the date of 835 Isabelle Cartron adds: 'Ermentaire attribue cette bataille à l'année 835, le jour de la fête de saint Philibert, précision qui permet de mettre sérieusement en doute l'objectivité de la date. Cette dernière a été retenue par l'auteur des *Annales Engolismenses,* a. 835, p. 485 puis du *Chronicon Aquitanicum,* a. 835, p. 252' : I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 34, n. 14. In fact, the second book of the *Miracles of Saint Philbert* actually says that this battle took place two years before the monks left Noirmoutier for good. Placing the very fabulous battle described by Ermentarius in 835 comes from Poudardin's analysis (*Monuments de l'histoire*, pp. 66-67, n. 2): 'La translation des reliques de saint Philibert ayant eu lieu au mois de juin 836, il semblerait que les événements dont il est ici question dussent se placer au mois d'août 834. Mais le *Chron. Engolismense* […] parle d'un combat livré le 20 août 835, qui ne peut être que celui dont parle Ermentaire. Il faut donc admettre que, dans son calcul, ce dernier aura compté comme première année celle même de la translation, et comme seconde la précédente, c'est-à-dire 835.'

gross exaggeration regarding the Northmen's likely losses (particularly as he says they had come in only nine ships) Ermentarius's account is most likely correct in reporting that the Franks had been victorious, a victory over the Northmen which was 'only possible because the tide had gone out, allowing Rainald and his horsemen to cross from the mainland'.[1]

Whatever the truth of the matter, at least some of the coastal defences the Carolingians had tried to put in place were still working from time to time, although land-based ones rather than ships. In the aftermath of this latest raid the monks of Noirmoutier 'saw themselves being forced to dissolve the last link that bound them to the island'.[2]

In 836 Abbot Hilbod asked Louis the Pious's son Pippin I of Aquitaine for help. Pippin replied that he could not do anything because even at low tides the island was often inaccessible to his army but was easy to reach by ship for the Northmen at any time when the sea was calm.[3] The Franks could not consider defending the island with ships they clearly did not have, at least not in this region. In fact, 'there is indeed no indication that any Carolingian ruler ever used a naval force at sea against Scandinavian attack'.[4] Ultimately, fearing that their walls would not survive a major attack the monks of Noirmoutier reluctantly decided that they must remove Saint Philibert's body (*corpus*) to Déas. Hilbod asked Pippin for permission to do so, which was granted, and the saint's bones were removed on 7 June 836. The monks also left Noirmoutier.[5] T. D. Kendrick observes: 'The dangers of its island-position made defence against a Viking fleet a peril worse than precipitate flight. Eventually the wretched and often ruined buildings of the monastery were abandoned, and the island became a Viking-headquarters where the pirates could pass the winter.'[6] In reality there is no firm evidence that the monastery was wretched and ruined, and as far as we know the Northmen did not overwinter on an Aquitanian island for the first time until the winter of 843/844 following the sack of Nantes.[7]

In terms of all these recorded and unrecorded raids on the islands of northern Aquitaine, particularly on the bay of Bourgneuf, from 799 and for the next three and a half decades,

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[1] S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 68.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 69, my translation.
[3] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, I, Prologue, ed. Poupardin, p. 25; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 94-95; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 34.
[4] S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 51.
[5] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, I, Prologue, ed. Poupardin, pp. 24-25; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 95; *AAng* 836, p. 485: 'sanctus Filibertus 7 Id. Iun. Hero insula effoditur et transfertur'; *ChrAquit* 836, p. 252: 'corpus sancti Phyliberti 7 Idus Iunii ex Herio insula effoditur, et Burgundiam perfertur'. For the whole long history of the subsequent peregrinations of the community of Saint-Philibert see I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*.
[6] T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings*, p. 193.
[7] See Chapter 3.

Walther Vogel's conjecture was that except for the raid in 820 on the island of Bouin, in the bay of Bourgneuf near the mouth of the Loire,[1] all the other raids on Noirmoutier (also in the same bay) from the 810s through to the 830s were not recorded in the *Royal Frankish Annals* and, as there were no reports of raiders landing in England or on the 'North Sea coasts' in these years which there would have been if the Aquitanian raiders in these years had gone back to 'Denmark or Norway' each winter, this suggests that 'these Vikings came from Ireland and returned there', 'diese Wikinger von Irland kamen und sich dorthin zurückzogen'.[2] Simon Coupland explicitly follows Walther Vogel in this belief by saying: 'It seems likely that the fleets responsible for these attacks were Norwegians sailing from Ireland, who consequently aroused no comment in the northern Frankish annals because they did not pass along the North Sea or Channel coasts, unlike the Danish raiders of 820. In this context it is significant that the raiders who sacked Nantes in 843 were *Westfaldingi,* that is, from Vestfold in Norway.'[3] Whilst there could well have been an Irish connection for some of these raids, in my opinion at least some of them, and not just that of 820, could have originated in Denmark and/or Frisia. With regard to Vogel's argument regarding the absence of reports in the *Royal Frankish Annals* or elsewhere of raiders landing in England or on the 'North Sea coasts' this is a somewhat unconvincing argument because there is a plethora of evidence showing that Scandinavian 'pirate' fleets were operating all along the coasts of northern Francia and Frisia during the whole first four decades of the ninth century. Furthermore, as Clare Downham has recently demonstrated 'early viking activity in England was more extensive than the common stock of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle allows'.[4]

It is not known if the Northmen came back to Noirmoutier or to the bay of Bourgneuf between 835 and 843 although there is a rather intriguing but possibly unreliable report of them

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[1] See W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 64-65. Vogel also believed (*ibid*., p. 62) the attack in 820 came from Denmark (as do I), but says the Northmen might have then moved on to Ireland (*ibid*., p. 65), which as mentioned above is at least possible.

[2] *Ibid*., pp. 64-65.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 7. See also *idem*, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', p. 190: 'Two areas of the Carolingian empire came under attack at this time: Frisia, where the culprits were Danes, making their way south along the Frankish coast, and Aquitaine, where the raiders were probably Norwegians coming from Ireland, which suffered a wave of Norse invasions in the early ninth century.' H. Shetelig, *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland, Part 1, An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe* (Oslo, 1940) [hereafter *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*], had earlier explicitly followed Vogel in saying (at p. 105) that these early raids 'manifestly started from Ireland, following the well-known old sea-route to the mouths of the great French rivers, the Garonne and the Loire'. Here Shetelig seems to be jumping ahead to 844 in terms of the Garonne but he does not say this.

[4] C. Downham, 'The Earliest Viking Activity in England', *The English Historical Review*, 132, 554 (2017), pp. 1-12, at p. 12.

raiding in Brittany in 837 in the late *Annals of Saint-Florent of Saumur*.[1] From what we can tell from the meagre sources at our disposal the Northmen - whether of the 'Danish' or 'Norwegian' variety - were fully occupied in northern Francia, Flanders, Frisia and in Britain and Ireland in these years. But they certainly returned to the south in the summer of 843 when, whether in a pact with the rebellious Frankish count Lambert or not, they captured and sacked the town of Nantes and pillaged various parts of the surrounding area.

The so-called *Chronicle of Nantes* reports that when the Northmen had finished their pillaging, they went to Noirmoutier with their immense spoils, including many captives who they hoped to ransom to their families or sell into slavery. While the Northmen were violently arguing with each other about the fair division of the booty which they had unloaded onto Noirmoutier's beaches some of the captives managed to escape.[2] This attack on Nantes and subsequent events are discussed in some detail in the next chapter.

To summarise: Between 799 and 843, a period of over forty years, the Northmen had come back again and again to Noirmoutier and to the surrounding area; if not every summer, then certainly quite frequently. It is also of interest to note that until 843 at Nantes in all the contemporary sources there is not a single mention of monks or civilians being massacred (as had happened for example at Lindisfarne in England and Iona in Scotland), and definitely no reports of rape or people being dragged away to be sold as slaves. As Coupland says, rather surprisingly there is no 'clear evidence of Viking rape: certainly, they were not known for "rape and pillage" in the ninth century'.[3] Of course this is evidence by silence and in no way proves that such things did not happen. But given the way the monks and clerics who wrote the annals and chronicles tended to revel in such lurid details in later years it is telling nonetheless.

The production and distribution of salt

Before we examine in more detail the suggestion that salt might have been one of the things that brought the Northmen back again and again to the bay of Bourgneuf during these years we need to take a look at the nature and extent of salt production and trade in Carolingian France, particularly along the Loire and in the bay of Bourgneuf itself.

In Europe salt was and still is produced by three primary methods: solar evaporation of sea

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[1] *Annales Sancti Florentii Salmurensis*, in *Recueil d'annales angevines et vendômoises*, ed. L. Halphen (Paris, 1903), p. 113: 'DCCCXXXVII. Normanni vastant Britanniam.' W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 70, n. 2, asked whether this report, which is not mentioned anywhere else, may have been based on some lost Breton annals. If this attack on Brittany actually happened (and in 837) we would perhaps be best to place it in the context of all the raids in England and Frisia (or even Ireland) between 835 and 838, an idea I will not attempt to explore more here.
[2] *La chronique de Nantes (570 environ-1049)*, ed. R. Merlet (Paris, 1896), chap. 7, pp. 18-19.
[3] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', *History*, 88 (2003), pp. 187-203, at p. 186.

water 'collected in man-made sea-gardens along the Atlantic coast of France and the Mediterranean', salt-wells in Central Europe and salt extracted from cooking peat in Frisia.[1] Sea-gardens, *salines* in French, were situated 'mainly north and south of the estuary of the Loire, particularly in the bay of Bourgneuf' in the early medieval period.[2] The most efficient and thus the cheapest of these three methods was solar evaporation. Here the salt marshes along the coasts of Aquitaine and southern Brittany had an advantage: with more sun and shallower waterways than those found in more northerly parts of Europe such as those along the Channel coast or in Frisia.[3] In southerly areas harvesting salt by evaporation goes back to prehistoric times. It is also known that Roman transport vessels used to carry salt along the gulf of Machecoul to the valley of Tenu - both in the *pays de Retz* just south of Nantes and immediately opposite Noirmoutier.[4] Even today there are only four areas in France that produce salt from the evaporation of sea water, the product being called *Fleur de Sel*. The first three areas are located in Aquitaine and the Breton march. Two of these are the island of Noirmoutier and the peninsula of Guérande, both of which lie at the mouth of the Loire, precisely the area under consideration here. A third area, the Île de Ré and Île d'Oléron and the adjacent coastal salt marshes, lies just to the south near the mouths of the rivers Charente and Gironde/Garonne. The Île de Ré may have also suffered incursions by the Northmen and the Charente region soon became a Scandinavian base for a time.[5] In these areas production is undertaken by salt workers called *sauniers* (meaning salt workers) and *paludiers* (meaning marsh workers). The fourth salt-producing area, the Camargue on the Mediterranean coast, is outside the scope of this work, but it is interesting to note that it too played host to a large Scandinavian flotilla in 859 to 860 after the Northmen had raided in Muslim Iberia (for the second time) and in North Africa, and visited Narbonne.[6]

In his study of Carolingian commerce Michael McCormick says: 'Salt and bread were basic

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[1] A. E. Verhulst, *The Carolingian Economy* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 80.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique en France septentrionale (VIIIe - XIe siècles)', *Annales de Bretagne et Pays de l'Ouest*, 115.3 (2008), pp. 7-32, e.g. at pp. 16-17, available online at https://doi.org/10.4000/abpo.284, pp. 2-23.
[4] C. A. Villalobos and L. Menanteau, 'Paléoenvironnements et techniques de production du sel marin (par ignition ou insolation) durant l'Antiquité : les cas des baies de Bourgneuf (France) et de Cadix (Espagne)', in J.-C. Hocquet and J.-L. Sarrazin (eds.), *Le sel de la Baie. Histoire, archéologie, ethnologie des sels atlantiques* (Rennes, 2006), pp. 87-103, esp. pp. 97-101; O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 10, n. 9.
[5] Cf. J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg'; J. Chapelot and E. Rieth, 'Navigation et ports fluviaux dans la moyenne Charente, de l'Antiquité tardive au XIe siècle d'après l'archéologie et les textes', in *Les actes du XXXVe Congrès de la SHMES* (La Rochelle, 2004); F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands. Les Vikings à Bordeaux et la mémoire de leurs incursions. État des sources', *Revue archéologique de Bordeaux*, 99 (2008), pp. 23-38; A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, and J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente? Le témoignage de l'archéologie', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc* (Bayeux, 2014), pp. 42-49; A. Dumont and J.-F. Mariotti (eds.), *Archéologie et histoire du fleuve Charente : Taillebourg - Port d'Envaux : une zone portuaire du haut Moyen Âge sur le fleuve Charente* (Dijon, 2013).
[6] See chapters 4 and 6.

to life, and to Carolingian commerce [...]. Efforts of Carolingian institutions to buy and sell the salt they needed help us to see it travelling by the boatloads up the rivers of Frankland, and by the wagonload over its roads'.[1] There is an abundance of evidence for the importance and extent of the production and trade of salt in the Merovingian and Carolingian periods.[2] At the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the eighth century the important abbey of Saint-Martin at Tours received 400 pounds of salt from the island of Noirmoutier.[3] Around the same time the abbey of Jumièges on the Seine also received a delivery of 300 pounds of salt from Noirmoutier.[4] Whether this salt came by sea or via inland rivers and roads is not known. Jumièges also received salt from the Cotentin, this time I think certainly by sea.[5] Even earlier, the *Gesta Dagoberti* explicitly tells us that in about 635 the abbey of Saint-Denis in Paris had bought land producing salt in the *pays de Retz*, the salt marsh area south of Nantes and immediately opposite Noirmoutier, as well as buying salt itself from the bay of Bourgneuf.[6]

Salt production and trade was carried on both by the abbeys/monasteries and by independent merchants up and down the Loire and other rivers where there were various toll and customs houses (*tonlieux*) and markets buying and selling salt. Verhulst says: 'The exploitation of the *salines* and perhaps also the ships were probably in the hands of private or free entrepreneurs under the supervision of the king;'[7] whilst Bruand says that there was, 'a trade independent of the great monastic networks'.[8]

A fascinating and rare glimpse of these salt merchants can be found in 821 in the so-called

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[1] M. McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, AD 300 - 900* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 698.

[2] See for example O. Bruand, *Voyageurs et marchandises aux temps carolingiens. Les réseaux de communication entre Loire et Meuse aux VIIIe et IXe siècles* (Brussels, 2002); *idem*, 'Diffusion du sel de l'Atlantique et circulation monétaire au haut Moyen Âge', in J.-C. Hocquet and J.-L. Sarrazin (eds.), *Le sel de la Baie*, pp. 197-221; *idem*, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique'; J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français: le cas des ports du sel (VIe-XVe siècle)', *Historia, instituciones, documentos*, 35 (2008), pp. 107-26.

[3] J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 128: 'Soit au total 400 livres (130kg) de sel du marais d'Er (Noirmoutier).'

[4] 'Fiunt in suma sal libras CCC de areas monasterii Eriense': *Passio Acaunensium Martyrum*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH*, *SRM*, 3 (Hanover, 1896), p. 22. Cf. O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 11 and n. 19; D. Claude, 'Die Handwerker der Merowingerzeit nach den erzählenden und urkundlichen Quellen', in H. Jankuhn and W. Jansen, *Das Handwerk in vor- und frühgeschichtlicher Zeit, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaft* (Göttingen, 1981), pp. 204-66), at p. 212.

[5] 'De Corialinse […] salis modios XXV': *Constitutio Angesigi abbatis* in *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium/Fragmentum Chronici Fontanellensis*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH, Scriptores*, 2 (Hanover, 1829), pp. 270-304, at p. 299. For how much salt this amounted to see O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 16, n. 22.

[6] *Liber Historiae Francorum*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH, SRM*, 2 (Hanover, 1888), pp. 413-14.

[7] A. E. Verhulst, *The Carolingian Economy*, p. 80.

[8] O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 7, my translation.

'Instruction of Louis the Pious to his subjects',[1] which reads: 'Concerning the land at the coast where they make salt. We want that some of them come to our court session and that their account be audited to enable us to settle the dispute between them with equity.'[2] Unfortunately, we know neither the circumstances of this dispute nor Louis's eventual decision, but this rare insight shows once again the importance of salt and the salt trade in the area in the ninth century.

It is clear from Bruand's and others' work that the early medieval salt trade and the routes it used covered not only all of southern and western France - along the Loire, the Charente and the Garonne - but also stretched to the Seine in the north and possibly to Flanders and Frisia as well. As Bruand expressed it: 'What is [...] sure is that sea salt, and principally that of the lower Loire, had conquered a vast space'.[3]

Overseas trade in salt

But what of overseas trade? In the Carolingian period, or even before, did this extensive and lucrative salt trade extend across the open seas to parts of northern Europe? Bruand maintains that, 'the salt of the lower Loire was exported to Great Britain, to Ireland and to the north of Europe',[4] and that 'salt from the Loire was of interest to clients a long way away and was exported to Great Britain, Ireland and the Channel coasts'.[5] The evidence for such assertions needs to be examined.

There were certainly flourishing overseas trade routes throughout the Merovingian and Carolingian periods: across the Channel and the North Sea and between Brittany and Ireland and Aquitaine.[6] Numerous trading 'ports' had developed from Frisia and Flanders all the way

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[1] *Capitularia regum Francorum*, I, no. 148, chap. 8, p. 301. Sometimes referred to in French as the 'Convocation au palais des sauniers', the palace being Aachen.
[2] A. E. Verhulst, *The Carolingian Economy*, p. 81.
[3] O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 24, my translation.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 7, my translation.
[5] O. Bruand, *Voyageurs et marchandises aux temps carolingiens. Les réseaux de communication entre Loire et Meuse aux VIIIe et IXe siècles* (Brussels, 2002), p. 193.
[6] For more on this overseas trade see *inter alia*: O. Bruand, *Voyageurs et marchandises*; *idem*, 'Diffusion du sel de l'Atlantique et circulation monétaire au haut Moyen Âge'; *idem*, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique; J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français'; S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, 2 vols (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011), vol. 2, pp. 73-107; E. James, 'Ireland and Western Gaul in the Merovingian Period', in D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick, and D. N. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 362-86. esp. 376-77; A. R. Lewis, 'Le commerce et la navigation sur les côtes atlantiques de la Gaule du Ve au XIe siècle', *Le Moyen Âge*, 59 (1953), pp. 249-98; *idem*, *The Northern Seas. Shipping and Commerce in Northern Europe, AD 300-1100* (Princeton, 1958); N.-Y. Tonnerre, 'Le commerce nantais à l'époque mérovingienne', *Mémoires de la société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne*, 61 (1984), pp. 5-27; P. Johanek, 'Der Aussenhandel des Frankenreiches der Merowingerzeit nach Norden und Osten im Spiegel der Schriftquellen', in K. Düwel, H. Jankuhn, *et al* (eds.), *Untersuchungen zu Handel und Verkehr der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit*, vol. 3, *Der Handel des frühen Mittelalters: Bericht über die Kolloquien der Kommission für die Altertumskunde Mittel- und Nordeuropas in den*

down the long coasts of the Frankish kingdom, around Brittany and into Aquitaine. Across the Channel it was the same. Often these ports had a name ending in *wik/vic/wich*: Quentovic, Sandwich, Hamwich, and even Lundonwich, to name just a few. There were other important 'ports' at Ghent in Flanders, Dorestad in Frisia, Hedeby in Denmark, Kaupang in Norway, and Birka in Sweden. On the Atlantic coast, as noted, we have the no doubt small trading 'port' of the island of Noirmoutier which was called *Concha*; while on the facing coast was the port of *Furcae*, which served the salt-producing areas of the Île de Bouin and *Ampan* (Beauvoir-sur-Mer). There certainly were other trading 'ports' further south as well, including at Bordeaux.[1]

In the north of France, the *Life of Saint Philibert*, which was originally written sometime early in the eighth century (perhaps around 700 or slightly later) but rewritten by the Noirmoutier monk Ermentarius in the 830s, tells of fleets of ships on the Seine heading for the sea and of the 'navigable routes' used by these ships and of 'numerous commercial exchanges'.[2] Also on the Seine, the early ninth-century *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium* tells of English merchants from the 'island of Britain' trading 'across the sea' with Gaul in 788.[3] We also hear in the *Gesta* that around the mid-seventh century there was a 'glorious coming and going of ships' in the mouth of the Seine and that fleets of merchant ships came in summertime from the infinite Ocean (*ex infinito oceano*) 'also called' or 'or even' the Britannic sea (*sive mari Brittannico*),[4] which I think can be understood as from the infinite 'Ocean' of the Atlantic coast.[5]

Further south the *Life of Saint Philibert* tells us that there were Irish merchant ships arriving at Noirmoutier, implicitly in the late seventh century, who brought a welcome supply of clothes and shoes for the monks.[6] Earlier still there is a story in the *Vita Columbani* written by the monk Jonas who lived with the Irish saint Columbán at the monastery of Bobbio in the Italian Apennines during the latter part of the saint's life. Jonas likely got the information for his *Life*

Jahren 1980 bis 1983 (Göttingen, 1985), pp. 214-54, pp. 227-29; J.-M. Picard, 'Aquitaine et Irlande dans le Haut Moyen Age', in J.-M. Picard (ed.), *Aquitaine and Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 17-30.

[1] J.-C. Cassard, 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens', in M. Balard (ed.), *L'Europe et l'Océan au Moyen Age. Contribution à l'Histoire de la Navigation* ; *Actes des congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, 17e congrès, Nantes, 1986* (Paris, 1988), pp. 19-36, at pp. 30-31.

[2] Ermentarius, *Life of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, p. 6; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 78.

[3] 'ut nemo de Brittannia insula ac gente Anglorum mercimonii causa litus oceani maris attingeret in Gallia [...]': *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium*, ed. S. Löwenfeld, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 28 (Hanover, 1886), pp. 46-47.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[5] See the earlier discussion of the term *Mare britannicum* and particularly P. Marquand, '*Mare britannicum*'. S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 2, p. 210, n. 21, says this means the 'La Manche', I am not so convinced.

[6] 'nec multum post Scottorum navis diversis mercimoniis plena ad litus affuit, quae calciamenta ac vestimenta fratribus larga copia ministravit': Ermentarius, *Life of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, chap. 29, p. 17; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 88.

from Columbán's own lips and those of his companions.[1] The story tells that while in Gaul in about 610 Columbán and some of his Irish monks had boarded a river trading ship (*scafa*) in Nevers, far up the Loire. When the monks finally arrived in Nantes the local authorities had no trouble in immediately finding Columbán a merchant ship 'which carried merchandise of the Irish', 'quae Scottorum commercia vexerat' and which was bound for Ireland (*ad Hiberniam destinare*) to take him and his companions back to Ireland - although eventually Columbán decided to stay in Gaul. The merchant ship was loaded with wine, corn and malt to be taken to Ireland. Not only does this story indicate seemingly regular commercial contacts between the valley of the Loire and Ireland around the year 600 but it also illustrates the fact that at this time potentially perishable goods were being shipped long distances by sea to parts of northern Europe.[2]

Of even more importance is a long report found in the first book of the *Miracles of Saint Philibert* written by Ermentarius between late 837 and 840,[3] which is probably an eyewitness account of an event slightly earlier.[4] It seems a group of independent Breton merchant ships (*Brittanniae naves*)[5] had come from Brittany on the open sea into the bay of Bourgneuf loaded with corn, which they then traded for salt either in the port called *Furcae* near Beauvoir-sur-Mer or on Noirmoutier. While at *Furcae* and without the pilot's knowledge (*gubernatore nesciente*),[6] the crew of one of these ships decided to 'partim furando, partim emendo', 'half

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[1] Jonas of Bobbio: *Liber 1 Vita Columbani*, in *Ionae Vitae Sanctorum Columbani, Vedastis, Iohannis*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH*, *SRG*, 37 (Hanover, 1905), book 1, chap. 22, pp. 200-6.

[2] For early maritime trade between Aquitaine and Ireland see *inter alia*: J.-M. Picard, 'Aquitaine et Irlande dans le Haut Moyen Age'; P. Boissonnade, 'Les relations entre l'Aquitaine, le Poitou et l'Ireland du *V* e- au *IX* e *siècle*', and *idem*, 'Les îles du Bas-Poitou pendant les cinq premiers siècles du haut Moyen Age (*V*e-*IX*e *siècle*), *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4 (1916-1918), pp. 181-202 and pp. 365-403; J. Vendryes, 'Compte rendu de Zimmer, Über direkte Handelsverbindungen Westgalliens mit Ireland im Alterthum und frühen Mittelalter', *Revue Celtique*, 32 (1911), pp. 130-32; *idem*, 'Les vins de Gaule en Irlande et l'expression Fin aicneta', and 'Compte rendu de Boissonnade, Relations entre l'Aquitaine, le Poitou et l'Irlande du Ve au IXe siècle', *Revue Celtique*, 38 (1920-21), pp. 19-24 and pp. 71-75; A. F. O'Brien, 'Commercial Relations between Aquitaine and Ireland c. 1000 to c. 1550', in J.-M. Picard (ed.), *Aquitaine and Ireland in the Middle Ages*, pp. 31-80.

[3] I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 25; Delhommeau and Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 13.

[4] Placed in '836-837-838' by Delhommeau and Bouhier, *Ermentaire. Vie et Miracles de Saint Philbert*, p. 30. For the whole fascinating story see: Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, I, ed. Poupardin, chap. 81, pp. 54-56; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 124-26; J.-C. Cassard, 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens', pp. 30-31.

[5] Some French historians suppose these to have been merchant ships from the island of Britain, or even 'England', see for example J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français' p. 110; O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 18 and n. 26; É. Boutin, *La baie de Bretagne et sa contrebande*, p. 25. That they were Breton ships can, I think, probably be inferred from all the other evidence of Breton ships coming in the bay of Bourgneuf and elsewhere in Aquitaine, as well as the fact that the *Miracles of Saint Philibert* say that the people of Noirmoutier gave the stranded merchants provisions as they did for foreigners - *veluti alienigenis*.

[6] For the meaning of *gubernator* see L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton, 1971), pp. 314-15; S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 2, p. 260.

steal and half buy' some lead tiles which had previously been removed from the roof of Saint Philibert's monastery on the adjacent island of Noirmoutier and taken to *Furcae* to keep this valuable commodity safe from the constant raids of the 'Northmen'. Laden with their cargoes of salt the Breton ships then kept getting caught in contrary winds. They were first forced to make landfall at *Concha*, the port of Noirmoutier, where the locals had to supply the crew with provisions because they had 'only salt' on board (*sed sal tantum deferebant*). Having set sail again the ships were blown to the Île de Batz (now Batz-sur-Mer on the Guérande peninsula) where, after another abortive attempt to sail back to Brittany, the crew's theft of the lead was discovered and they were forced by the intervention of the holy Saint Philibert to repent and return their booty, before finally getting a fair wind and returning home. Despite the fact that this merchant flotilla spent a total of twenty-one days at anchor trying to catch the right wind to return home, which indicates the problems of overseas navigation at the time, eventually they were able to set sail for home with their cargo of salt aboard.[1] Stéphane Lebecq summarises as follows:

> It is Atlantic Gaul which was the most concerned with these [Irish] trade relations from Armorica [Brittany] and Gascony passing through the central point that Noirmoutier became after the foundation of a Columbanian monastery by saint Philibert in 677 [...] it is via the estuary of the Loire that Neustria could communicate with Ireland.'[2]

In relation to the overseas salt trade in the Merovingian and Carolingian period, in his article 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français: le cas des ports du sel (VIe-XVe siècle)', after drawing on all the evidence available, including numismatic, Jean-Luc Sarrazin concludes that the starting points of the 'maritime routes' used for transporting salt stretched from the Vilaine (a river just north of the mouth of the Loire) to the Charente further south but that the main ports used for loading salt were on both sides of the mouth of the Loire estuary. In addition, he adds that: 'to the North the Frisian-English zone was manifestly the ultimate destination of these salt shipments.'[3]

Many more examples of such maritime trade could be cited, including the types of goods being imported and exported; such as corn, malt, oil, leather, lead and above all wine. But what is clear is that at least from the early seventh century and certainly well into the ninth century there was a lively maritime trade from the bay of Bourgneuf to Brittany, to more southerly

[1] See J.-C. Cassard, 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens', p. 26.
[2] S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 2, pp. 97-98, my translation.
[3] J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français', p. 116, my translations.

Aquitaine, to Ireland, certainly to the Seine and just possibly to England and Frisia as well, and that the goods being shipped north (and south) over the high seas included, rather unsurprisingly given what this area produced: salt.

Northmen, islands, slaves and salt

The Northmen liked islands both as targets and bases. In Frisia the island of Walcheren could be mentioned, in England Lindisfarne, plus the islands of Thanet and Sheppey, in Wales the island of Anglesey, in West Francia islands along the Seine such as Oissel, plus all the islands along the west coast of Aquitaine discussed here. Some of these islands presented tempting targets because in the early days of raiding at least they were often the places where the only accessible monasteries and thriving markets were sited. At the same time islands were attractive as bases for the Northmen because it was more difficult for the Franks or the English to attack them there. They were safe havens. Coupland rightly points out that Scandinavian 'warbands tended to return to their ships or camp on islands where the Franks could not get at them'.[1] Only when they could marshal much larger fleets and armies did the Northmen start to venture further inland.

Regarding Noirmoutier and the other nearby islands and coastal marshes, as has been shown from 799 and from 814-815, or thereabouts, until 835 the Northmen returned year after year to the area in the summer. From the 820s, or 830 at the latest, the monks of Noirmoutier had left each year before the 'viking season' for the safety of their satellite monastery at Déas taking all their ecclesiastical and other portable valuables with them. Most of the local islanders including the salt workers and merchants were left to their own devices. The question is what therefore did the Northmen then find to pillage? At least after the initial raids there would probably not have been any valuable ecclesiastical gold or silver to find or any valuable church books to ransom. Neither perhaps would richer people have been short-sighted enough to have stayed behind and run the risk of being captured for ransom or to be sold into slavery. Yet as far as we can tell from contemporary sources the majority of the population of Noirmoutier did remain and did not seek safety inland. The salt workers, the *sauniers* and *paludiers*, probably would not have had much choice in the matter. They had to harvest their crop to survive. Perhaps as Poupardin suggested from the 820s the people of Noirmoutier were probably able to defend themselves from within the new defensive *castrum* of the monastery while the Northmen plundered at will in the area; we cannot be sure. Of all the things that were produced or traded

[1] S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 68.

on Noirmoutier besides salt, namely oysters (perhaps), cattle, shoes, whale oil and a bit of wheat, none would have attracted the Northmen to come back year after year all the way from their more northerly homelands or bases. In the absence of precious church artefacts there were really only two commodities that could have been valuable enough to draw them back again and again: salt and slaves. I shall discuss slaves first.

That the Northmen were significant slave raiders as well as traders has been established beyond any doubt,[1] and there are countless examples in the historical record of unfortunate Franks, Frisians, English and Irish captives being schlepped off either to become slaves of the Northmen themselves or to be on-sold as slaves. Even in the early eleventh century the English cleric Wulfstan testifies to this practice. In his 'Sermon of the Wolf to the English' Wulfstan despaired that the Danes were dragging people off to be slaves while typically putting most of the blame on the English themselves.[2] If the Northmen captured people who could be profitably ransomed locally they would do so, as the example of the sack of Nantes in 843 shows.[3] If ransoms were not forthcoming they would ship the captives back to such thriving northern *entrepôts* as Dorestad in Frisia and Hedeby in Denmark, together later with Dublin,[4] to be on-sold to slave merchants. Orlando Patterson says that 'from their own home bases, especially Hedeby, the Scandinavian merchants spread out all over Western Europe, and frequently as far as the Mediterranean, selling their human cargoes'.[5] From these northern markets, which, as said, included Dublin, the captives might find themselves making a long journey to Muslim Iberia, North Africa or the Byzantine world, possibly via the major slave trading town of Verdun.[6] Some

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[1] There is nowadays an extensive literature on the subject of 'viking' slave raiding and trading throughout Europe, which, very fascinating though it is, is not a subject I can examine much more here.

[2] R. M. Liuzza, trans. *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, in J. Black and others (eds), *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, The Medieval Period*, I (Toronto, 2014), p. 161; D. Whitelock, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (New York, 1966); *eadem*, *English Historical Documents*, I: *c. 500–1041* (London, 1955), pp. 857-58.

[3] See Chapter 3.

[4] See P. Holm, 'The Slave Trade of Dublin, Ninth to Twelfth Centuries', *Peritia*, 5 (1986), pp. 317-45. See also B. Raffield, 'The slave markets of the Viking world: comparative perspectives on an "invisible archaeology"', *Slavery and Abolition*, 40. 4 (2019), pp. 682-705.

[5] O. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), p. 154.

[6] There is really nothing against the idea that at times in the ninth century and later the Northmen sometimes sold those captives whom they had grabbed in Aquitaine, and who they had not ransomed, more directly to the Muslims in Iberia. As we shall see in later chapters the two expeditions to Christian and Muslim Iberia and beyond in the ninth century, in 844 and from 858/859 to late 861, both seem to have originated in Aquitaine, although there is nothing in the historical record to suggest that these raids were primarily concerned with slave trading or even less with gaining control of the slave trade, as for instance has been claimed by J. Supéry in his many imaginative works culminating in his recent *La Saga des Vikings: Une autre histoire des invasions* (Paris, 2018). In regard to this idea and to Supéry's whole thesis of a long-standing Scandinavian 'principality' in Gascony, Alban Gautier in 'Une principauté viking en Gascogne? À propos d'une imposture', has recently provided a most withering critique with which I am mostly in agreement. In terms of the 'slave trade', Gautier (p. 175) says: 'En premier lieu l'auteur, historien amateur et passionné implanté dans les Landes [Supéry], prétend avoir apporté les preuves de la création à partir des années 840 [actually earlier than this] et du maintien pendant un siècle et demi (jusqu'en 982 pour être précis) d'une principauté viking en Gascogne, dont l'existence aurait bouleversé le cours de l'histoire

would doubtless have suffered castration along the way because eunuchs were much in demand in the Byzantine and Muslim worlds.[1] We might imagine that such was the fate of quite a number of the inhabitants of Noirmoutier and the other areas around the mouth of the Loire in the early decades of the ninth century. Yet Noirmoutier and the other nearby salt marsh islands and coasts had only limited populations, and the principal pillar of the local economies was the production of salt. If the Scandinavian raiders came mostly with the intent of carting away slaves, soon there would not have been too many people left to capture. Wiser, and certainly richer, people would have already moved to safer places. That before 843 at the town of Nantes we hear nothing of people being captured to become slaves is perhaps of relevance.

Salt on the other hand was probably as lucrative a commodity as slaves. In the salt-producing areas around the mouth of the Loire and on the islands and marshy coasts further to the south the salt harvest was, and still is, gathered in late summer. If the Northmen arrived at the right time, they could simply walk ashore with no or little opposition and grab the newly harvested salt. It might be just have been question of distance and logistics, but in both 820 and 835 the Northmen only arrived in the area of the Loire estuary in late summer, after they had raided or attempted to raid in more northern climes. Having visited the area from as early as 799, they clearly would have known what commodity was available for raiding as well as when it would be ready.

Was salt a target?

It has so far been shown that the production and trading of salt was of paramount importance around the bay of Bourgneuf in the ninth century, and even well before this as well, and that this salt trade was conducted not only along the rivers of western France but also extended over

européenne et dont les conséquences se seraient fait sentir à très long terme, au moins jusqu'à l'époque moderne. Cette principauté aurait été fondée non pas à l'issue de pillages sporadiques, mais par un clan scandinave, qu'il identifie comme celui de Ragnar, Björn Côte-de-Fer et Hastein, personnages bien connus par les historiens latins du XIe-XIIe siècle et par les *fornaldarsögur*, les sagas « légendaires » islandaises: ce clan se serait livré à une invasion et une occupation méthodiques du pays afin de s'assurer la maîtrise lucrative des routes commerciales (en particulier celles de la traite) en direction de la Méditerranée islamique et byzantine.' Then Gautier (p. 179) asks: 'Peut-on affirmer que cette occupation s'est déroulée dans le cadre d'un effort concerté de conquête depuis la Manche jusqu'à la Méditerranée, constituant une « guerre commerciale » destinée à prendre le contrôle des routes de la traite [of slaves] et dont on peut identifier les meneurs?' The answer is emphatically 'No', although Gautier, no doubt through lack of space in a summary critique, does not really bring this out as he could have done.

[1] M. Valente, 'Castrating Monks: Vikings, the Slave Trade, and the Value of Eunuchs', in L. Tracy (ed.), *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 174-87. For more on this slave trading, although not particularly by Northmen, see B. Raffield, 'The slave markets of the Viking world'; T. Freudenhammer, 'Frühmittelalterlicher Karawanenhandel zwischen dem Westfrankenreich und Al-Andalus', *Vierteljahresschrift fur Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 105. 3 (2018), pp. 391-406, also available in English translation 'Rafica: Early Medieval Caravan Trade between the West Frankish Kingdom and Al-Andalus' at https://www.academia.edu/42907709/Rafica_Early_Medieval_Caravan_Trade_between_the_West_Frankish_Kingdom_and_Al_Andalus.

the high seas to at least Brittany, the Seine and Ireland, but possibly further afield too. It has also been suggested that salt-producing islands such as Noirmoutier and Bouin were unlikely to have offered the Northmen much booty beyond a few slaves and, perhaps, salt.

That salt was an attractant has often been hinted at by previous scholars. In 1906 Walther Vogel wrote that Noirmoutier, 'did not seem to have been especially rich, because it belonged to those [places] that did not have to pay yearly levies or provide military services to the Empire, just prayers'. He added, however, that the island of Noirmoutier had 'a certain importance because of the salt production that already took place in the area in the ninth century', a production which would turn 'the bay of Bourgneuf into a highly visited port of call for Hansa ships in the later Middle Ages'.[1] He continued: 'Already at this time [the early 800s] this salt production had caused a widespread trade from Brittany to Noirmoutier and to the neighbouring mainland harbours on the bay of Bourgneuf.' Given the importance of this lucrative Carolingian trade in salt, Kendrick said that 'Noirmoutier was doubtless well known to the northern adventurer-merchants, and it was this place that became the first goal of northern pirates in the Atlantic waters'.[2] In his authoritative early study of the long history of the Bourgneuf 'Bay salt trade' Arthur Agats, when referring to the Northmen's raid on Bouin in 820, said that 'the plundering of the Northmen shows the importance that the island already had. As the Northmen also pursued trade on their expeditions, so it is clear that Bouin was already known to them because of its salt works'.[3] Émile Boutin, the eminent local historian of the bay of Bourgneuf and founder of the 'Société des historiens du Pays de Retz' was quite explicit in linking the arrival of the Northmen to salt, the 'white gold' as it was often called: 'C'est pour utiliser les marais de la Baie de Bourgneuf que les Normands s'installeront au sud de l'embouchure de la Loire', 'It is to use the salt marshes of the bay of Bourgneuf that the Northmen will install themselves south of the mouth of the Loire'.[4] Later he wrote: 'Dès le neuvième siècle, le sel de la baie est si réputé qu'il attire et fixe sur nos côtes les Normands', 'From the ninth century salt from the bay is so reputed that it attracted and kept the Northmen on our coasts.'[5] In his article titled 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français: le cas des ports du sel (VIe-XVe siècle)' Jean-Luc Sarrazin puts this attraction in the context of the Atlantic salt trade:

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 62, my translation.
[2] T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings*, p. 193.
[3] A. Agats, *Der hansische Baienhandel*, p. 8, my translation.
[4] É. Boutin and M. Guitteny, *Le sel de l'Atlantique. Les secrets de l'or blanc* (Fromentine, 1992), p. 2.
[5] É. Boutin, 'Les moines et le sel de la Baie', my translation.

> Advantaged by its situation and by the renown of its monastery, Noirmoutier was certainly one of the long-distance bases of the Atlantic [salt] traffic. That it had attracted the Northmen in the 820s and particularly the 830s is not at all astonishing.[1]

In summary I think there is reasonable evidence, admittedly mostly of the circumstantial kind, that the Scandinavians in the bay of Bourgneuf in the early decades of the ninth century came there at least partly to benefit from the valuable sea salt harvested in the area.

If we can believe Prudentius of Troyes it was only after the sack of Nantes in 843 that the Northmen overwintered on an Aquitanian island, possibly I suggest elsewhere on the Île de Ré or the Île d'Oléron or another nearby island along the coast rather than on Noirmoutier.[2] In 'Les moines et le sel de la Baie' Boutin claims:

> But soon according to Ermentarius 'a plague came from the north and spread over all the inhabitants of the earth'. This peril was above all else present in the bay of salt because the Northmen were interested in our salt marshes. They made raids from the beginning of the ninth century on Noirmoutier, on Prigny [in Moutiers-en-Retz] and on Bouin. And they installed themselves on these three sites. On Noirmoutier at *la Conche aux Normands*, situated at *la Linière*, near to *l'Herbaudière*, from where they could surveil the mouth of the estuary of the Loire. At Prigny, on the fortified mound which later maps called the 'Danebutte' or the 'mound of the Danes'. A Viking anchor is conserved in the chapel of Prigny (ninth century). Finally, at Bouin, where the annals of Einhard[3] tell us in detail about one of their expeditions [...] they came back many times and made Bouin one of their bridgeheads to pillage the *salines*.[4]

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[1] J.-C. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français', p. 110, my translation.

[2] See Chapter 3. Actually, Prudentius does not say this was the first time the Northmen established a permanent-like settlement, but it is the first time we hear of it in an extant record.

[3] That is the *Royal Frankish Annals*.

[4] É. Boutin, *ibid*., my translation. As repeated in a similar fashion but with more detail in his book of the same year *La baie de Bretagne et sa contrebande*, pp. 28-29, where Boutin makes the claim that after the raid of 799 the Northmen returned to the area 'de 813', and that 'ils prennent l'habitude de venir chaque année, aux beau jours, à la Conche, entre le Vieil (île de Noirmoutier) et l'Herbaudière, l'endroit prit d'ailleurs le nom de Conche aux Normands. De là ils pouvaient surveiller tout l'estuaire de la Loire et intercepter toute barque chargée de de sel ou de vin'. This is Boutin's own wishful thinking; there is simply no historical or archaeological evidence that Northmen had returned by 813 (though it is not impossible), and certainly not that they returned to or established themselves at *la Conche* on Noirmoutier 'every year' thereafter. Similarly, Boutin here also suggests that 'des ancres de marine, fabriquées aux forges de Prigny' - where is the evidence for this place and date of fabrication? - and that these anchors 'rappellent le séjour de ces hommes [Northmen] qui restèrent ici plusieurs décennies'. But there is no evidence that the Northmen stayed at Prigny on the 'Butte de Prigny/Butte aux Danois' for several decades, and if Prigny was a base for a while it was most probably established later; see below. With regard to the island of Bouin, Boutin refers to the raid in 820, but then he adds that when they returned 'en 830 et en 843' they 'firent de Bundium (Bouin) une de leurs principales têtes de pont pour piller les salines'. There is no evidence that

One must be rather cautious in accepting such categorical claims regarding the Northmen installing themselves on these three sites in the early ninth century. Militating against assumptions of their establishment at this time are the *Annals of Angoulême* and the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* which say that the Northmen attacked and burned (the monastery on) Noirmoutier in 846.[1] If the Northmen had permanently settled on Noirmoutier with their households by then, as most historians contend but I would contest, why would they have had to attack and burn the monastery in 846, and then Déas as well in the following year?[2] It is more likely that the Northmen created these bases, if they did at all, only after they returned to the Loire estuary itself in 853.[3]

How could the Northmen have profited from salt?

If one of the reasons the Northmen kept coming to the area year after year was salt, how could they have profited from it? There are three possibilities. First, they could have ransomed it back to the producers, be they of the independent variety or the monks in monasteries such as those on Noirmoutier. Second, they could try to take control of the Carolingian inland river-based salt trade with its many lucrative tolls. Third, they could have shipped it back to Scandinavia or other parts of northern Europe to sell in one of the *emporia* or 'ports', as they certainly did with slaves. They might even have used it to conserve the fish they caught in the North Sea,[4] or more generally to conserve all types of food,[5] either during their long voyages or when they got 'home'.

In terms of the first possibility, we know that the Northmen often sold captives back to their families or even, when they were important enough, to Frankish and other kings. They sold

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the Northmen made Bouin one of their bridgeheads in either of these years. With regard to 843 at least, Boutin might at first sight not seem to fall into the usual trap of making Noirmoutier the Northmen's 'permanent' base after the sack of Nantes (for which see Chapter 3); but making Bouin one of their island bases thereafter is again just conjecture. Yet earlier on the same page (p. 29) he says, 'A partir de 843, les Normands eurent en effet une base permanente à Noirmoutier'. I will leave the matter here except just to say that although his highlighting of the 'salt connection' is most useful all his ideas regarding possible Scandinavian bases and their dating have no real historical worth.

[1] *AAng s.a.* 846, p. 486: '846. Herus insula mense Iulio a Normannis succenditur'; *Chronicle of Aquitaine* [hereafter *ChrAquit*] *s.a.* 846: *Chronicon Aquitanicum*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 2 (Hanover, 1829), pp. 252-53, at p. 253: '846. Northmanni mense Iulio Herio insulam succendunt.'

[2] *AAng* 847, p. 486: 'Normanni 4. Kal. Apr. Dius monasterium incendunt'; *ChrAqui*t 847, p. 253: '847. Northmanni 4. Kalendas Aprilis Deas Monasterium succcendunt.'

[3] For which see Chapter 4.

[4] Frapel [=François Pelletier], 'Zierikzee. L'exportation du sel de la Baie de Bourgneuf', *Lettres aux Amis de l'Île de Noirmoutier*, 74 (Noirmoutier, 1989), pp. 3-7, at p. 3.

[5] J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Commerce maritime et projections atlantiques des ports français', p. 107.

back non-human goods as well. It is certainly conceivable that the monks, the salt merchants or even the local *sauniers* and *paludiers* paid the Northmen to leave them and their salt harvest alone.

Secondly, the Northmen may have tried to gain control of the river-based salt trade along the rivers of south-west France: the Loire, the Garonne and the Charente. Over the coming years and decades, the Northmen were present and active along all these rivers, and very deep into the interior. They sacked many towns, monasteries and churches, but at various times they also controlled important towns such as Tours, Angers, Nantes, and Bordeaux. As we know, they also frequently used the many salty islands along the coast as bases. This was until, at different times in different places, the Franks' efforts to control the Northmen's free movement along these southern rivers started to meet with some success - essentially by building fortified bridges and *castra*.[1] The enormously important inland river-based salt trade would have been impossible without the Scandinavians' consent and thus they could well have allowed it to continue but demanded and taken a good slice of the very lucrative tolls for themselves. In personal correspondence Olivier Bruand says: 'It is true that the Northmen might have wanted to take control of the salt routes from which they could procure some revenues: In so doing they would play a *seigneurial* type of game by trying to create a place for themselves among the ruling elites capable of living from a levy on the products of the region.'[2] It is conceded that this is just an idea but I think one worthy of further research particularly in respect of the Northmen's activities on the Loire and in Aquitaine later in the ninth century. Regarding the third possibility, in *Der hansische Baienhandel* Agats suggested:

> Die Normannen, die bekanntlich ihre Züge in diese Gebiete ausdehnten, sind vielleicht die ersten gewesen, die das französische Seesalz in entferntere Gegenden gebracht haben. Nach ihnen mögen dann öfters Schiffe aus dem Norden nach dem Westen Frankreiches gesegelt sein, um den wichtigen Artikel nach der heimat fortzuführen.[3]

> The Northmen, who we know directed their raids to this area, were perhaps the first who had brought French sea salt to distant regions. After them, ships may have sailed more

[1] See S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*; *idem*, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald'; *idem*, 'The Carolingian Army and the Struggle against the Vikings',
[2] My translation.
[3] A. Agats, *Der hansische Baienhandel*, p. 46.

often from the North to western France in order to take this important commodity back home.[1]

It was, as we have seen, at precisely the time of the Scandinavian raids on this part of south-western France that Breton merchant ships were already loading salt in the bay of Bourgneuf destined for their home market, so the Northmen might just have been joining in. It could reasonably be suggested that salt was not ideal for transport in open boats in rough seas because it would easily dissolve, whereas river transport was less of a problem. Niels Lund says: 'I find it very difficult to imagine salt being shipped in viking ships in commercial quantities, whether in sacks or in barrels.'[2] That there was a flourishing river-based salt trade is undeniable, as Bruand and others have demonstrated, even though here too it could be argued that salt could have been prone to dissolve, although patently this was not in any way a deterrent or hindrance to the trade. Whether straw, mud, tarpaulins, sacks or even barrels were used to protect the salt is not known; they certainly were on land and along the rivers, and in later times sacks and barrels were definitely used to transport salt in ships to northern Europe.[3]

There is strong evidence that ships from Brittany and Ireland at the very least were transporting perishable commodities such as cereals, malt and even salt to their home markets in the ninth century and well before. The type of ships used by the Bretons on the high seas has been studied by the historian of Brittany Jean-Christophe Cassard, particularly in his study 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens'.[4] In addition, there were ships trading between Brittany, Neustria, England and Frisia which carried many commodities, including salt. These were probably the ships of Frisian design recognised by Alfred the Great in 896,[5] which were used to carry cargo throughout north-western Europe.[6] In the ninth century the Scandinavians did not yet have the specialised cargo ships later called knörrs/knarrs.[7] Their ships, like those of the Frisians, Anglo-Saxons and Irish, were open and thus longer voyages were certainly restricted to the summer.[8] That Scandinavian ships at this time were nevertheless able to transport a good deal of cargo is made clear by the many contemporary references to them carrying away slaves, their own families, gold and silver, as well as horses. Thus, Scandinavian

[1] My translation.
[2] Personal communication.
[3] See for example É. Boutin and M. Guitteny, *Le sel de l'Atlantique*, pp. 5, 21, 33, 49, 61.
[4] J.-C. Cassard, 'Les navigations bretonnes aux temps carolingiens'.
[5] *ASC s.a.* 896: ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 90.
[6] S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 2, p. 104.
[7] J. Bill, 'Ships and Seamanship', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, pp. 181-201, at p. 188.
[8] J. Bill, 'Viking Age ships and seafaring in the West', in I. S. Klæsøe (ed.), *Viking Trade and Settlement in Continental Western Europe* (Copenhagen, 2010), pp. 19-42, at p. 22; and in personal communication.

ships certainly had the capacity to transport salt over the seas and, if they could protect it from the elements, they might well have done so, although there is no definitive proof that they actually did. The Scandinavians of the ninth century were master mariners and ship-builders; in fact, their ships were renowned for their performance on the high seas and at least as good as Irish or Breton ships. Thus, if the Bretons, Frisians and English could transport perishable commodities including salt over the sea there seems no reason to doubt that the Scandinavians could do the same; indeed, the Scandinavians were in Frisia for much of the ninth century and would have been familiar with Frisian cargo ships. Specifically regarding 'whether the open boats of the Vikings could transport salt', Jan Bill, the curator of the Viking ship collection at the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, says: 'Since they [the vikings] evidently could transport wine in barrels (Hedeby), they certainly also could transport salt.'[1] Furthermore, at the *Viking World* conference at Nottingham University on 1 July 2016, Bill categorically maintained that early ninth-century viking ships could certainly transport 'several tons of salt' by sea.[2]

Any suggestion that the Northmen profited by trading in salt has to reckon with the objection that various parts of northern Europe, including England, produced salt themselves, so why import it from the south? In England this production was mostly on the coast, but there was inland production as well, at places such as Droitwich and Nantwich and elsewhere.[3] There were also salt sources along the northern coast of Francia as well, as in Flanders and Frisia, including on the island of Walcheren[4] which was controlled for much of the ninth century by Danish royal exiles. These salt sources were often controlled, as they were on Noirmoutier, by monasteries, although because of the lack of sufficient sun the producers had to extract salt by heating brine or peat, both onerous and expensive processes.[5] To my mind this is not a decisive

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[1] Personal communication.

[2] An anonymous peer reviewer of my 2016 article 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France: Was there a connection?' wrote: 'They [ninth-century viking ships] had cargo capacity, just not on the same scale as later vessels that carried staples like grain and stockfish. As a high-value product, salt (like wine) would be an ideal cargo for the commerce of the age and of course proper packaging for sea travel was not beyond the technology of Viking Age Scandinavia (or elsewhere).'

[3] For pre- and post-Conquest salt production and trade in England see *inter alia*: A. R. Bridbury, *England and the Salt Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1955); J. Campbell, 'Domesday Herrings', in C. Harper-Bill, C. Rawcliffe and R. G. Wilson (eds.), *East Anglia's History* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 5-17; L. Keen, 'Coastal salt production in Norman England', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 11 (1989), pp. 133-79.

[4] For salt production in Frisia in the Carolingian period see J. C. Besterman, 'Frisian salt and the problem of Salt-making in North Holland in the Carolingian Period', *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek*, 24 (1974), pp. 171-74.

[5] See J. C. Besterman, 'Frisian salt and the problem of Salt-making in North Holland in the Carolingian Period', p. 172; J.-C. Hocquet, '*Sedes et Effusio*. Métrologie et histoire religieuse durant la « phase ecclésiastique » de la production du sel', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 27 (1984), pp. 57-69; *idem*, 'L'évolution des techniques de fabrication du sel marin sur les rivages de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest', in A. Lottin, J-C. Hocquet, and S. Lebecq (eds.), *Les hommes et la mer dans l'Europe du Nord-Ouest de l'Antiquité a nos jours*, *Actes du colloque de*

argument against the suggestion that the Scandinavians of the ninth century transported salt to northern Europe. Regarding these more northerly salt sources, Olivier Bruand concluded from the evidence that 'these regions were not self-sufficient and had to have recourse to a complementary supply collected from the mouth of the Loire'.[1]

As Agats extensively documented a hundred years ago,[2] in the later Middle Ages there was a centuries-long international trade in salt from the bay of Bourgneuf and similar salty areas along the coast of Aquitaine, to England, Flanders, northern Germany, Scandinavia and the Baltic.[3] To highlight just a few of Agats' numerous examples: in a Hamburg ship manifest dating to before 1270 both salt and wine from Rochelle (in Poitou-Charentes) are listed;[4] in 1311 a merchant from (King's) Lynn loaded lampreys in Nantes and salt from the Poitou coast (possibly from the Île de Ré or the *Marais Poitevin* just opposite, or even from La Rochelle, all places near the mouth of the river Charente), only to be robbed at sea by German ships;[5] and in 1363 a Flemish merchant brought wine and salt from the bay of Bourgneuf (very possibly Noirmoutier) to Skåne in present-day southern Sweden.[6] Of course, because there was a trade in 'bay salt' reaching these northerly markets in the High Middle Ages does not mean it already existed in the ninth century, but the most important and relevant point is that throughout much of the Middle Ages, English, Flemish and German merchants shipped salt from the bay of Bourgneuf and elsewhere in Aquitaine to customers all over northern Europe even though salt was certainly produced there too, sometimes on a large scale in some areas. The reason was without doubt the superior quality and better price of the salt produced in these warmer southern climes. Olivier Bruand summarises the point:

> In effect the production of salt is a seasonal activity, this would habitually favour the *paludiers* of the Nantes and Charente regions who could work from spring to the start of autumn while the activity of those along the Channel could not have exceeded two or three months, unless they resorted, as in Flanders and in Frisia, to heating brine. But it is necessary to include the price of fuel, of wood and more certainly of peat in Frisia, as well

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Boulogne-sur-Mer (juin 1984), Revue du Nord - Histoire 1 (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 1986), pp. 3-22; S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol. 2, p. 78; O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', pp, 16, 17 and nn. 23, 24, 25.

[1] O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 17, my translation.

[2] Cf. A. Agats, *Der hansische Baienhandel*.

[3] See also A. R. Bridbury, *England and the Salt Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 44-76; É. Boutin, 'La Hanse et la Baie'.

[4] A. Agats, *Der hansische Baienhandel*, p. 49.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 51.

[6] *Ibid*., p. 52.

as the preparation time. This made this salt more expensive, more reserved for the local market, while the low cost of the salt of the Loire allowed diffusion much further afield.[1]

A possible Irish connection

It may be recalled that Walther Vogel suggested that some of the earliest raids in France might have had a connection with Ireland, and they may indeed have. We have also seen that there was a flourishing maritime trade between the bay of Bourgneuf and Ireland in the ninth century. It could thus well be that some of the Northmen in Ireland had learned of what could be had in the bay, including salt, from Irish merchants who had long traded there.

There is a remarkable record in the rather reliable *Annals of Ulster* for 828 which reports: 'Mucar már di muccaibh mora i n-airer n-Ardde Ciannachta o Gallaibh', 'a great slaughter of porpoises off the coast of Ard Cianachta [the county Louth coast of eastern Ireland] by the foreigners [Northmen]'.[2] *Mucc mora*, literally 'sea-pig', corresponds to the Modern Irish expression *muc mara* for a porpoise. Colmán Etchingham says: 'This looks like industrial scale whaling by Vikings off a part of eastern Ireland where there are indications of bases before the generally accepted date for the establishment of Dublin in 841.'[3] Second, as Etchingham has also pointed out, there is the place-name 'Saltee Islands'.[4] These are two small islands off the south coast of county Wexford in south-eastern Ireland, and obviously derive their name from Old Norse *Salt-ey* or perhaps originally the plural *Salt-eyjar*. The Irish place-name specialist Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig points to evidence of later medieval salt production on the mainland coast of south Wexford, not far from the Saltee Islands, reflected in two 'townland' names of 'Saltmills'.[5] Regarding later medieval salt production, Mac Giolla Easpaig concludes: 'Le nom Saltee suggère une activité similaire a une époque antérieure', but he takes this thought no further. Colmán Etchingham suggests that these islands, which are not suitable for salt production because the surrounding sea is too deep, 'must have been involved in some way in collecting and/or trading salt in the Viking Age',[6] although salt-related names such as this cannot be accurately dated. He notes that 'the nearby town of Wexford was established by the

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[1] O. Bruand, 'Pénétration et circulation du sel de l'Atlantique', p. 17, my translation.
[2] *AU* 828.3.
[3] Personal communication. For the hunting at sea of large marine mammals at this time see S. Lebecq, 'Scènes de chasse aux mammifères marins (mers du Nord, VIe-XIIe siècles)', in E. Mornet and F. Morenzoni (eds.), *Milieux naturels, espaces sociaux. Études offertes à Robert Delort* (Paris, 1997), pp. 241-54, republished in S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, vol.1, pp. 239-52.
[4] Personal communication.
[5] D. Mac Giolla Easpaig, 'L'influence scandinave sur la toponymie irlandaise', in. É. Ridel (ed.), *L'heritage maritime des vikings* (Caen, 2002), pp. 441-82, at p, 457; C. Etchingham, personal communication.
[6] Personal communication.

vikings, whose descendants still bore the socio-legally distinctive label of *Ostmen* as late as the fourteenth century, around the future ferry-port of Rosslare'.[1]

Summary comments

In regard to the earliest Scandinavian raids in France, and specifically those touching the limits of Aquitaine around the mouth of the Loire, of which there were many from 799, we find lots of 'connections' although they are not always easy to determine or pin down in every instance. Some of these raids do seem to have originated in Frisia or Scandinavia itself, although an Irish or Irish Sea connection could in some cases also be possible. It is also not out of the question that some flotillas or warbands did remain in the area for a year or two, not necessarily returning 'home' (wherever that was) each winter. I will not repeat all the analysis presented above. But was there a salt connection? Because most of the contemporary annalists and chroniclers in Frankish Gaul were monks or clerics who either reported local events of interest to their own monastery or more distant events from faraway royal courts, it is perhaps unsurprising that at least in the early days we rarely, if ever, hear of the objectives of the Northmen's raids or the nature of the booty they carted off. What we hear about is simply that in a particular year these 'pagans' arrived, caused much destruction and left with whatever they had pillaged. Olivier Bruand puts it: 'Our sources are primarily interested in the violent raids and in the plundering of the possessions of nobles or monks. Ordinary commerce is not a matter that was socially valued by the authors of the *diplômes* and charters or by the hagiographers.'[2]

Many historians have presented these early Scandinavian raids on the coasts of France as random or opportunistic attacks undertaken on soft targets such as monasteries, churches or fairs - attacks undertaken whenever and wherever the local kings seemed weak or divided and thus unable to offer any effective resistance. Or they happened at other times when the Frankish kings enlisted the Northmen in their family fights. There is much truth in all this, but to use an old cliché the Northmen were both raiders and traders, and even when they were raiding it is unlikely that the booty they were after was limited to church gold and silver or even to slaves. While the available sources unfortunately give little or no hint as to the plans behind, and the intentions of, any of the early Scandinavian raids in France, it does seem a reasonable supposition that the theft - maybe even the occasional purchase? - of such a precious commodity as salt, whether for their own use in the preservation of fish and meat, for later on-sale in the

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Personal communication, my translation.

many trading towns of the North or to re-sell it back to the producers, could have been one of the objectives of their repeated appearances in the salty islands and marshy coasts around the mouth of the Loire in the first decades of the ninth century. It might also be added that at least in later years it is probable that another incentive for the northern fleets to venture into the Loire, Charente and Garonne was their role as allies or paid agents of Frankish kings or their enemies such as Pippin II of Aquitaine. They were often paid for such services: if they could combine paid mercenary activity with some lucrative plundering then so much the better.

If salt was not a part of the equation then we might always struggle to find a compelling rationale to explain why the Northmen kept coming back to the same salty places for up to forty years. In the absence of a smoking gun such as a contemporary and reliable Scandinavian or Frankish source telling us, for example, that 'Danish ships arrived in Hedeby laden with enormous quantities of salt they had pillaged in Noirmoutier', or 'The salt producers of Noirmoutier bought back the salt that the pagans had stolen from them', the idea that salt was one of the motivations for the Northmen to return again and again to the mouth of the Loire and to other salty areas of Aquitaine remains a conjecture, though that is not to say an unlikely one. The evidence is almost all circumstantial; it would certainly not stand up in an English criminal court of law where the standard of proof is 'beyond any reasonable doubt'. However in a civil court where the standard of proof is 'on the balance of evidence' it just might.

Scandinavian ships and fleets were very expensive things. Ship owners wanted a return on their investment; they did not raid willy-nilly; they knew where they wanted to go and why. Perhaps the sea salt of the bay of Bourgneuf might indeed have been one of the things they wanted.

Chapter 3

THE 840s AND THE IRISH MULLAGHBODEN SILVER COINS

One of the primary concerns of this thesis is to explore the various connections of different groups of Scandinavians who operated in Aquitaine. The principal objective of this chapter is to examine these links in just one limited period: the 840s.[1]

What is particularly interesting about this specific case is that on the basis of a handful of Carolingian coins found in Ireland in the late nineteenth century a whole theory has arisen suggesting that the Northmen involved both came from Ireland and returned there. Although there are several very clear cases of Northmen in Aquitaine (as well as in Brittany, in Frisia and on the Seine) having close links with Ireland and Britain, and having moved back and forth between these places, those active there in the 840s were not among them. Rather the evidence clearly points to the conclusion that the Northmen involved, who were probably led by a powerful chieftain called Oskar,[2] came originally from Vestfold in southern Norway, and that they arrived on the Loire and in Aquitaine after raiding in southern England and northern France (and perhaps even in Frisia). They had no Irish connection. They certainly did have strong international connections, just not the ones conventionally proposed.

The Mullaghboden silver coins

In 1871 eleven Carolingian silver coins were found at Mullaghboden in Co. Kildare in Ireland. 'The coins were associated with a group of burials, and it is not impossible that they came from a Viking grave'.[3] At least five of these coins had been minted in Melle (dep. Deux-Sèvres) in

[1] A shorter version of this chapter was published as S. M. Lewis, 'Aquitanian Viking Connections: The 840s and the Question of the Mullaghboden Silver Coins', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 15 (2019), pp. 151-202.

[2] His Latinised name is given as *Oscheri/Hoseri* (*Oscherus/Hoserus*) in the ninth-century *Chronicle of Fontenelle* (see below). Like others (for example Vogel, Nelson and Coupland) I will render the name as Oskar rather than as the Old Icelandic form Ásgeirr as is sometimes done. The original 'Old Danish' form of his name is not fully knowable. For instance, it may or may not have featured nasalization of the first vowel (Ans/As, or for that matter Ons/Os). The vowel of the second element is also difficult to ascertain. I thank Russell Poole for this point.

[3] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden as a Reflection of Westfalding Intervention in Ireland', *Universitetets Oldsaksamling Årbok* (1960-61), pp. 49–62, at p. 50; referencing J. F. Shearman, 'Discovery of Carolingian Coins at Mullaboden, Ballymore Eustace', *Journal of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, 2 (1872), pp. 13-16, at p. 13. Despite this statement Dolley was still doubtful regarding an associated grave (see p. 62). J. Graham-Campbell, 'The Viking-Age silver hoards of Ireland', in B. Almqvist and D. Greene (eds.), *Proceedings of the Seventh Viking Congress, Dublin, 15-21 August 1973*, *Viking Society for Northern Research* (London, 1976), pp. 39-74, at p. 61, observed that the postulated burial with the hoard had been 'rightly dismissed by Dolley (1960-61, 62). It was not even considered necessary to include it in the list of "Rejected burials" in S. H. Harrison and R. Ó Floinn, *Viking Graves and Grave-Goods in Ireland* (2014)'. I thank James Graham-Campbell for this point.

Aquitaine, including two deniers of Pippin II of Aquitaine minted between 845 and 848,[1] which therefore provides a *terminus post quem* for their deposit in Ireland. The Aquitanian origin of this handful of coins is not in any doubt, although the precise date of their burial and the circumstances surrounding it are. Michael Dolley proposed a date of deposit of *c*. 846-47;[2] Mark Blackburn suggested *c*.850,[3] and Simon Coupland 845-50.[4] The scholarly consensus is that these coins had been looted by the Northmen who had been raiding on the Loire and in more southerly Aquitaine between 843 and 849-50.

Looking for an Irish context for the burial of the coins at Mullaghboden, Dolley followed William E. D. Allen's fabulous construction in *The Poet and the Spae-wife*[5] and found this context in one of the battles fought in 848 between the Irish and the 'reinforced Vikings', which the Northmen lost - probably the fight at *Farragh* 'no more than thirty miles' from Mullaghboden, or that at *Sciath Nechtain*, 'only twenty miles away'.[6] Taking cognisance of the fact that the Northmen who attacked Nantes in 843 were called *Westfaldingi* by the local *Annals of Angoulême*, Dolley wrote:

> The coins found in 1871 are precisely those we would expect to find in the possession of a Westfalding who had campaigned in Aquitaine between 843 and 846, and it is not unduly straining the evidence to proceed to suggest that their owner could have been one of those who fell in battle in 848 when the Irish obtained four signal victories over the reinforced Vikings, Farragh is no more than thirty miles from Ballymore Eustace, and Sciath Nechtain only twenty, and so it is not impossible that the owner of the coins had been present at one or other of these routs and had been hunted down and slain near the

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[1] M. Blackburn, 'Presidential Address 2006: Currency under the Vikings, Part 3: Ireland, Wales, Isle of Man and Scotland in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries', *British Numismatic Journal*, 71 (2007), pp. 119-49, at p. 125; S. Coupland, 'The Coinages of Pippin I and II of Aquitaine', *Revue numismatique*, 6th series 31 (1989), pp. 194-222, at pp. 203, 215, 219-22; *idem*, 'The Early Coinage of Charles the Bald, 840–864', *The Numismatic Chronicle*, 151 (1991), pp. 121-58, at pp. 132-33.

[2] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden', p. 61; R. H. M. Dolley and K. F. Morrison, 'Finds of Carolingian Coins from Great Britain and Ireland', *British Numismatic Journal* 32 (1963), pp. 75-87, at p.78; R. H. M. Dolley, 'New Light on the 1843 Viking-Age Coin-Hoard from Derrykeighan near Dervock in Co. Antrim', *British Numismatic Journal*, 34 (1965), pp. 32-36, at p. 35.

[3] M. Blackburn, 'Presidential Address 2006: Currency under the Vikings, Part 3', p. 125.

[4] S. Coupland, 'Attributing the Melle Coins of Charlemagne and Charles the Bald, Particularly Single Finds from the Netherlands', *Jaarboek voor Munt- en Penningkunde*, 102 (2015), pp. 61-96, at p. 71.

[5] W. E. D. Allen, *The Poet and the Spae-Wife: An Attempt to Reconstruct al-Ghazal's Embassy to the Vikings* (Dublin, 1960). For critiques of Allen's story see *inter alia* S. M. Pons-Sanz, 'Whom did al-Ghazal meet? An exchange of embassies between the Arabs from al-Andalus and the Vikings', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 28 (2004), pp. 5-28; A. Christys, *Vikings in the South: Voyages to Iberia and the Mediterranean* (London, 2015), pp. 25-27; C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6.

[6] See *AU* 848.4-5. The Irish *Forach* is usually identified as Farragh near Skreen in Co. Meath (this is where Dolley takes it to be), but others identify it with Farrow on Lough Iron in Westmeath. *Sciath Nechtain* is near Castledermot, Co. Kildare.

place where the hoard was discovered. On the other hand, victories are rarely bloodless for victor as well as vanquished, and one could just as well imagine that the owner concealed his coins in 846/847 before setting out for the last time on one or other of the campaigns which so oppressed the Irish that the triumphs of 848 seemed to be a divine deliverance.[1]

Taking his lead from Allen once again, Dolley goes on to say that in 846 the 'Norse Vikings' involved in raids in Aquitaine had 'destroyed their base at Noirmoutier - apparently to prevent it falling into the hands of their Danish rivals - and withdrew northwards', and that there is no 'reasonable doubt that many if not all of the Vikings concerned returned to Ireland where their services were sorely needed after the overthrow of Turgesius'.[2] In fact, there is quite a lot of doubt. While confirming the Aquitanian origin of the Mullaghboden coins, Mark Blackburn is slightly more cautious: 'The high proportion of coins of Melle suggests there was direct contact between the Irish Sea and Western France, though whether as a product of Viking raids on Aquitaine, of which several are recorded in the later 840s and 850s, or of trading, perhaps in slaves, is unclear.'[3] To this we could add the observation that, although it may be true, there is no certainty at all that a 'viking', that is a Scandinavian raider, deposited the coins. This fact should be borne in mind in all that follows.[4]

Not only had the coins supposedly been brought to Ireland from Aquitaine sometime in the late 840s by the Northmen who had been raiding there, but according to some historians and numismatists these raiders had come from Ireland in the first place. The idea that Scandinavian raiders in Aquitaine had then sailed on to Ireland, or even came from and then 'returned to' Ireland, sometime in the late 840s is usually supported, implicitly or explicitly, by the reference in the local and reliable Aquitanian *Annals of Angoulême* which say that the Northmen who had sacked Nantes on the Loire in 843 were *Westfaldingi*.[5] Given the seemingly reasonable

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[1] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden', p. 61. These four Irish victories over the Northmen in 848 were: the defeat and killing of Tomrair at the hands of Ólchobur, king of Munster (*AU* 848.5); the Uí Néill over-king Máel Sechnaill of Clann Cholmáin defeating the 'heathens' at Forrach (*AU* 848.4); Tigernach mac Fócartai of South Brega routing the 'heathens' at Dísert Do-Chonna (*AU* 848.6), and Éoganacht Chaisil of Co. Tipperary defeating the 'heathens' at Dún Maíle Tuile (*AU* 848.7).

[2] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden', pp. 60-61

[3] M. Blackburn, 'Presidential Address 2006: Currency under the Vikings, Part 3', p. 125.

[4] There was a thriving centuries-long commerce between Ireland and Aquitaine extending well into the ninth century. There is an abundant literature on this subject, for which see in the first instance S. M. Lewis 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France' and Chapter 2 and the many references contained therein. Although Ireland was not a coin-using society at this time, there are still many ways these very few coins could have arrived in Ireland other than via a large Aquitanian 'viking' fleet arriving in Ireland.

[5] In fact, they say *Wesfaldingi*: 'Nametis civitas a Wesfaldingis capitur' (*AAng* 843, p. 486). The later and related Limousin version called the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* (*ChrAquit* 843, p. 253) says 'Eoquoque anno Namnetis a Wesfaldingis capitur'.

assumption that *Westfaldingi* probably means 'men of the Westfold', and that Vestfold is an area on the west side of Oslo fjord in present-day southern Norway, coupled with the usual belief that before the early 850s the Scandinavians in Ireland were exclusively from 'Norway', and, as it used to be and still is believed,[1] that these 'Norwegians' in Ireland had actually come from Vestfold in the first place, all these elements are put together to create the elaborate story Allen and Dolley told. Regarding an Irish origin, Allen wrote 'the Westfaldingi came from Ireland'.[2] Gwyn Jones repeated the same: 'men from Vestfold [...] in all probability come now from Ireland';[3] as did Simon Coupland: 'The Vikings who raided Nantes were described as "Westfaldingi", Norwegians from west of the Oslo fjord, and it is therefore probable that they came from Ireland.'[4] After mentioning Vestfold and the *Westfaldingi*, Élisabeth Ridel says that the Northmen who attacked Nantes in 843 had 'most probably travelled from their Celtic colonies in Scotland and perhaps Ireland, where they had since settled, and not directly from Norway'.[5] Regarding a return to Ireland, Dolley put it as follows: 'The truth is that the years 846-848 were years of utmost continual warfare [in Ireland] of which the Westfaldings from Aquitaine bore the brunt.'[6] Elsewhere Dolley goes even further and says that 'in 846 the Westfaldings returned to Norway by way of Ireland',[7] although he offers no evidence for this bold statement. The main problem with this whole construct is what Janet Nelson calls the 'lurking assumptions'.[8] I will question many of these in this chapter, while at the same time I will try to make any of my own assumptions explicit and not lurk.

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[1] See for example M. Valente, *The Vikings in Ireland: Settlement, Trade and Urbanization* (Dublin, 2008); C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7; A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian Kings in the British Isles 850-880* (Oxford, 1977).

[2] W. E. D. Allen, *The Poet and the Spae-Wife*, p. 7.

[3] G. Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, 2nd edn (Oxford and New York, 1984), p. 211.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 16; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 17, has the Northmen who sacked Nantes in 843 coming from 'Westfold' but, strangely, sailing round England [*sic*] via the Hebrides and 'Saint George's Channel' (connecting the Irish Sea to the Celtic Sea). J. Sheehan, 'The *Longphort* in Viking Age Ireland', *Acta Archaeologica*, 79 (2008), pp. 282-295, at p. 289, just follows Dolley but implies it was Dublin-based Northmen who went to Aquitaine.

[5] É. Ridel, 'From Scotland to Normandy: The Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings', in B. Ballin Smith, S. Taylor, and G. Williams (eds.), *West over Sea: Studies in Scandinavian Sea-Borne Expansion and Settlement before 1300* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 81-94, at p. 86. F. Durand, *Les Vikings*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1969), p. 25, joined in as well: 'Les Vikings norvégiens eurent vite fait déborder la Cornouaille pour prendre pied en Bretagne. En 843 ils mettent à la sac la ville de Nantes, puis établissent une base permanente dans l'île de Noirmoutier.' One should mention that Durand's short book, very readable though it is, is one of the most credulous works on the vikings that I have ever read.

[6] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden', p. 61.

[7] R. H. M. Dolley, 'New Light on the 1843 Viking-Age Coin-Hoard from Derrykeighan near Dervock in Co. Antrim', *British Numismatic Journal*, 34 (1965), pp. 32-36, at p. 35.

[8] J. L. Nelson, 'England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: The Vikings and Others', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13 (2003), pp. 1-28, at p. 24.

Oskar on the Seine

As we have seen in the previous chapter, starting in 799 there had been many Scandinavian raids both on the Aquitanian monastery of Saint Philibert, situated on the island of Noirmoutier in the bay of Bourgneuf, and in the surrounding area; the last one being in 835.[1] Raiders only returned to the area in 843 to sack the town of Nantes. I will argue that they came, or at least a good part of them did, proximately from the Seine. Their leader was probably a chieftain called Oskar.

The *Chronicle of Fontenelle*[2] was written sometime after 872 by a monk of the abbey of Saint-Wandrille, situated at Fontenelle on the banks of the Seine between Rouen and the sea.[3] The monk of Fontenelle was quite well informed about the activities of Scandinavian raiders between 841 and 859, on the Seine, in Brittany and in Aquitaine. Two annals are of particular interest here. The first says:

> ANNO DOMINICAE INCARNATIONIS D CCC XLI°, indictione IIII, IIII° idus maii, uenerunt Nortmanni, Oscheri quoque dux. Pridie idus maii incensa est ab eis urbs Rotomagus; XXII° kalendas iunii egressi sunt a Rothomago; VIIII° kalendas iunii Gemmetieum monasterium igne cremarunt. VIII° kalendas iunii redemptum est Fontinella coenobium libris VI. V^{o} kalendas iunii uenerunt monachi de sancto Dyonisio, redemeruntque capita LXVIII°, libris XXVI. Pridie kalendas iunii pagani mare petierunt. Obuiusque illus factus est Vulfardus, regio homo cum populo, sed pagani minime ad pugnam se praeparauerunt.[4]

> In the year of the Lord's Incarnation 841, the fourth Indiction, the Northmen appeared on 12 May, led by Oskar. They set fire to the city of Rouen on 14 May and left on 16 May. On 24 May they burned down the monastery at Jumièges, on 25 May the monastery of Saint-Wandrille was ransomed for six pounds, and on 28 May monks arrived from St.

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[1] For these earliest Scandinavian raids in Aquitaine see also S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France'.

[2] Sometimes called the *Chronicle of Saint-Wandrille* (*Chronicon sancti Wandregesili*), or *The first Annals of Fontenelle* (*Annales Fontanellenses priores*) [hereafter *ChrFont*]; it covers the period 841-859: *Annales Fontanellenses priores (Chronicon Fontanellense), Mélanges de la Société d'Histoire de Normandie*, 15, ed. J. Laporte (Paris, 1951), pp. 65-90.

[3] For which see F. Lot, *Études critiques sur l'abbaye de Saint-Wandrille*, *Bibliothèque de l'École de Hautes Études*, 204 (Paris, 1913); *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 65-72. Jean Laporte (*ibid*., p. 70) would date its composition to 875-885.

[4] *ChrFont*, ed. Laporte, p. 75.

> Denis and bought back sixty-eight captives for twenty-six pounds. On 31 May the pagans made for the sea, and although Wulfard, a royal vassal, opposed them with an army, the pagans were not at all prepared to fight.[1]

This was clearly a *blitzkrieg* type of raid and Oskar withdrew when it looked like he would have to fight.[2] Ten years later in 851[3] we read:

> Eodem tempore [in 851], classis Nortmannorum fluuium Sequanam ingressa est, ipso die III° idus Octobris, duce Hoseri, qui aliquot annos Rothomagum urbem depopularat, ac incendio cremarat, il est anno dominicae Incarnationis D CCC XLI, et per annos XI multas regions latrocinando occuparat, inter quas et urbem Burdegalim, munitissimam, caput regionis Nouempopulanae, de qua tunc progressus fuerat.[4]

> At the same time a fleet of Northmen entered the river Seine on 13 October, led by Oskar, who had laid waste and burned the city of Rouen several years earlier, that is, in 841 A.D., and who for eleven years had occupied many regions and plundered them, including the heavily fortified city of Bordeaux, capital of the region of Novempopulana, from which he had then advanced.[5]

The Saint-Wandrille monk then goes on to describe in some detail the *déroulement* of this raid, including burning the chronicler's own abbey at Fontenelle,[6] until, he tells us, Oskar's fleet left the Seine on 5 June 852 and 'went back to Bordeaux on laden ships', 'Sicque onustis nauibus ad Burdegaliam reuersi sunt'.[7]

These local and near contemporary reports are one of only very few testimonies we have where the name of a Scandinavian chieftain is given twice: *Oscheri/Hoseri* (that is Oscherus/Hoserus), a name which as mentioned earlier I will render as Oskar. We are also told where he and his men had been in the intervening years between their two appearances on the Seine, as well as where they went back to on laden ships: to Bordeaux in southern Aquitaine. The monk who wrote the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* is quite explicit regarding what Oskar's fleet

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[1] *ChrFont*: trans. Coupland.
[2] Cf. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 10-12.
[3] This arrival on the Seine in 851 is also mentioned in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (*AB* 851: ed. Grat, p. 63; trans. Nelson, p. 73), and in the *Annals of Rouen* (*Annales Rotomagenses*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 26 (Leipzig, 1882), pp. 490-526, at p. 494.
[4] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 87
[5] *ChrFont*: trans. Coupland
[6] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 87, 89
[7] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 89; trans. Coupland. Or as Jean Laporte translates this, 'ayant rempli leurs navires de butin, revinrent à Bordeaux' (*ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 88).

had been doing in the years between 841 and 851-52: they had occupied and plundered many regions, including capturing the fortified city of Bordeaux. As we will see, these 'many regions' included parts of Aquitaine other than Bordeaux and, almost certainly, Iberia as well.

Where had Oskar's fleet come from? In the so-called *Annals of Saint-Bertin* Prudentius of Troyes reports that in 841:

> Pyratae Danorum ab Oceano euripo deuecti Rotumum irruentes, rapinis, ferro ignique bacchantes urbem, monachos reliquumque uulgum uel cedibus uel captiuitate pessumdederunt et omnia monasteria seu quaecumque loca flumini Sequanae adherentia aut depopulati sunt aut multis acceptis pecuniis territa reliquerunt.[1]

> Danish pirates sailed down the Channel and attacked Rouen, plundered the town with pillage, fire and sword, slaughtered or took captive the monks and the rest of the population, and laid waste all the monasteries and other places along the banks of the Seine, or else took larger payments and left them thoroughly terrified.[2]

This report was written when Prudentius was still at Charles the Bald's court and confirms the fuller account in the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*. The term *ab Oceano euripo* is translated by Janet Nelson as 'down the Channel', by which she means that these 'pirates' had sailed 'down' through the strait of Dover, what the French call *le détroit du Pas-de-Calais*.[3] Simon Coupland agrees, saying they came from the 'North Sea'.[4] The meaning of *ab Oceano euripo* is thus that Oskar's fleet came through 'the ocean strait' from the North Sea to reach the Seine, and consequently we might infer it came either from Frisia or somewhere in Scandinavia. This fact will be important later in regard to the origin of the Northmen who sacked Nantes in 843 and then raided in Aquitaine in subsequent years.

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[1] *AB* 841: ed. Grat, p. 37.

[2] *AB* 841: trans. Nelson, p. 50. Oskar's short raid up the Seine in 841 and the burning of Fontenelle is also reported in a marginal note to a ninth-century manuscript about the battle of Fontenoy: *Rhythmus de pugna Fontanetica*, ed. E. Dümmler, *MGH*, *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, 2 (Berlin, 1884), pp. 137-39, at p. 137. See also *Annales Rotomagenses* 842 [*recte* 841], p. 494; *Vita Audoini episcope Rotomagensis*, eds. B. Krusch and W. Levison, *MGH*, *SRM*, 5 (Hanover, 1910), pp. 536-67, at p. 549.

[3] Although Prudentius may or may not have been aware of it, *Euripus* is a narrow strait separating the Greek island of Euboea in the Aegean Sea from Boeotia in mainland Greece; but *Euripos* (Greek)/*Euripus* (Latin) also means any narrow strait of water with strong tidal currents. The Dover strait fits this meaning much better than the much wider part of the English Channel to the south-west. There is widespread agreement in the dictionaries that already in the classical period the term *Euripo* had the meaning of 'sea channel' or 'strait'; I thank Coupland for this point. See also *AB*: ed. Grat, p. 37, n. 1; *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 86, n. 56.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that in 840 the English of Ealdorman Wulfheard had fought at Southampton against '33 ships-loads'.[1] Wulfheard was victorious and 'made great slaughter', but he passed away in the same year. Also in 840 Ealdorman Æthelhelm had fought against the 'Danes' with the men of Dorset at Portland and was killed there - the Danish had 'possession of the field of slaughter'.[2] Additionally, under 841, manuscript A of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says that Ealdorman Hereberht was killed by 'heathen men' in [Romney] Marsh in southern Kent and that 'the same year, again in Lindsey and in East Anglia and among the inhabitants of Kent, many men were killed by the raiding-army'.[3] Whether all these raids on England in 840 and 841 were made by the same Scandinavian fleet is not known. In my opinion at least some of them were undertaken by the 'Danish pirates' who in 841 Prudentius says 'had for some years been imposing many sufferings on Frisia and the other coastal regions of the Christians'.[4] Given that Oskar's fleet was only on the Seine from the 12th to the 31st of May 841, it is quite possible that one or more of the raids in Kent, Lindsey and East Anglia in the same year were down to him, whether before or after the Seine raid. If it was before, the location of these places would certainly have needed the fleet to then sail through the Dover Strait in order to reach the Seine.

Walther Vogel strongly argued that at least some of these Northmen in England in 840-41 were responsible for the short attack up the Seine in 841, and that:

> Es kann kein Zufall sein, daß sie sich gerade den allergünstigsten Augenblick zum Einfall in das Herz Westfrankens aussuchten. Genau sechs Wochen, nachdem Karl der Kahle die Seine bei Rouen überschritten hatte, aber noch bevor es ihm gelungen war, sich mit Ludwig zu vereinigen, also in einem Moment, wo sich seine ganze Aufmerksamkeit nach Osten richten mußte, lies am 12. Mai 841 eine dänische Flotte unter Oskar [...] in die Seine ein.[5]

> It cannot have been by chance that they straight away choose to make a descent into the heart of West Francia at the most propitious moment. Exactly six weeks after Charles the Bald had crossed the Seine near Rouen, but still before he had managed to join up with Louis [the German], thus at a moment where his [Charles's] whole attention had to have

[1] *ASC*, MSS A and E, *s.a.* 837 [*recte* 840], ed. and trans., Swanton, pp. 62-63.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *ASC,* MS A, *s.a.* 838 [*recte* 841], ed. and trans., Swanton, p. 62.
[4] *AB* 841: ed. Grat, p. 39; trans. Nelson, p. 51.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 84.

been directed to the East, a Danish fleet under Oskar [...] arrived on the Seine on 12 May 841.[1]

Yet it is also conceivable as Jan de Vries quite cogently argued that Oskar's fleet had come from Frisia, had raided up the Seine and then attacked London, Quentovic and Rochester, before moving on to the Loire.[2] According to the disgusted Prudentius, in 841 in order to 'secure the services' of Harald the Younger, the brother of the notorious Danish 'poacher turned gamekeeper' Rorik, Lothar I had granted him the Frisian island of 'Walcheren and the neighbouring regions as a benefice'.[3] This, wrote Prudentius, was 'an utterly detestable crime' because Harald 'along with other Danish pirates had for some years been imposing many sufferings on Frisia and the other coastal regions of the Christians'.[4] It is quite possible that Oskar had been one of these other Danish pirates who had been regularly attacking Frisia and the 'other coastal regions of the Christians' in the 830s. The two possibilities are in no way mutually exclusive, Oskar could have done both and nothing in the chronology excludes it.

Finally, Coupland says that Oskar's fleet came from the North Sea and thus 'almost certainly from Denmark'.[5] I do not know what Coupland means by 'Denmark' at this time. Is it mainland Jutland, ruled at this time by Horik I; the Danish islands; parts of the Oslo fjord, including Vestfold, which some suggest was controlled at times in the ninth century by Danes;[6] 'Denmark' of the Danish March in present-day southern Sweden, as proposed by Niels Lund;[7] or any of them? Jan de Vries also thought that Oskar was a 'Dane', but has him coming from

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[1] My translation.
[2] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 135-46.
[3] *AB* 841: trans. Nelson, p. 51.
[4] *Ibid*. *AB* 841: ed. Grat, p. 39: 'Herioldo qui cum ceteris Danorum pyratis per aliquot annos Frisiae aliisque christianorum maritimis incommoda tanta sui causa ad patris iniuriam inuexerat, Gualacras aliaque uicina loca huius meriti gratia in beneficium contulit; dignum sane omni detestatione facinus, ut qui mala christianis intulerant, idem christianorum terris et populis Christique ecclesiis praeferrentur, ut persecutores fidei christianae domini christianorum existerent et daemonum cultoribus christiani populi deseruirent!'
[5] S. Coupland*, Charles the Bald*, p. 29.
[6] See, for example, P. H. Sawyer, *Da Danmark blev Danmark: fra ca. år 700 til ca. 1050*, trans. M. Hvidt, in O. Olsen (ed.), *Gyldendal og Politikens Danmarkshistorie*, vol. 3 (Copenhagen, 1988), pp. 40-42; I. Skovgaard-Petersen, 'The making of the Danish kingdom', in K. Helle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia,* vol. 1, *Prehistory to 1520* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 168-83, at pp. 172-73; N. Lund, 'Scandinavia, c. 700–1066', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2, *c. 700–c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 202-27, at pp. 206-8; K. Helle, 'The History of the Early Viking Age in Norway', in H. B. Clarke, M. Ní Mhaonaigh, and R. Ó Floinn (eds.), *Ireland and Scandinavia in the Early Viking Age* (Dublin, 1998), pp. 240-60, at pp. 239, 241, 256-58; D. Skre, *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, in D. Skre (ed.), Kaupang Excavation Project. Publication Series, vol. 1, *Norske Oldfunn* XXII (Aarhus, 2007). pp. 458-68; *idem*, *Means of Exchange. Dealing with Silver in the Viking Period*, in D. Skre (ed.), Kaupang Excavation Project. Publication Series, vol. 2, *Norske Oldfunn* XXIII (Aarhus, 2008), pp. 349-50, 354. For a contrary view see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, various chapters.
[7] N. Lund, "'Denemearc", "tanmarkar but" and "tanmaurk ala'", in I. Wood and N. Lund (eds.), *Peoples and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600. Essays in honour of Peter Hayes Sawyer* (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 161-69.

Frisia and being joined in 842-43 by other Northmen from Ireland - possibly combining their forces in the English Channel or in Brittany.[1]

As already mentioned, the monk of Fontenelle says that on 31 May 841 Oskar's fleet had left the Seine for the sea ('Pridie kalendas iunii pagani mare petierunt').[2] They headed, eventually at least, to the Loire, where, having sailed round Brittany,[3] they appear in the summer of 843. What had they done in the meantime? In 842 the only Scandinavian attacks were on London and Rochester in England and, in May, on the important Frankish *emporium* of Quentovic.[4] These raids were very likely connected. Like De Vries, Vogel believed that the Northmen who attacked Quentovic came from London and after the attack they sailed back across to Rochester in Kent[5] - no doubt because this is the order these places appear in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and in the *Annals of St Neots*. Simon Coupland says the fleet 'perhaps came from England and certainly ended up there'.[6] Given that both London and Rochester are on the Thames perhaps it would be more reasonable to suggest that they were attacked at about the same time, whether this was before the attack on Quentovic or (less likely) after it. Whatever the case, Nithard in his *Life of Charlemagne* says explicitly that after attacking Quentovic the Northmen 'crossed the sea from there' and similarly plundered *Hamwic* (Anglo-Saxon Southampton) and an unidentified place called *Nordhunnwig*.[7] It is thus highly likely that after leaving the Seine Oskar's fleet was involved in one or more of these cross-channel raids. Frisia

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[1] J. de Vries, *De Wikinge in de lage Landen*, pp. 135-46. Jan de Vries not only argued that Oskar was a Dane but that he was in fact the leader of Harald's ('the Younger', but de Vries only has one Harald, that is Harald Klak) Frisian-based fleet after Harald had gone off to the Moselle with Emperor Lothar in early 842. In addition, he believed, along with Shetelig (cf. H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, pp. 110-11), that Lothar I used the Northmen for this attack as part of his struggle with his half-brother Charles the Bald and his brother Louis the German. In some ways these are appealing theories, but in terms of Lothar's involvement in the raid in 841 unlike with Harald the Younger (and others of his family) Oskar had no known connection with Lothar. Nevertheless, I do think that de Vries's 'Frisian connection' is the only coherent alternative to the reconstruction of events proposed in this chapter.

[2] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 75

[3] At the beginning of the tenth century Regino of Prüm wrote in his *Chronicle* that 'the Northmen went round Brittany by sea and occupied the mouth of the River Loire' (trans. MacLean, p. 133). This will be discussed more below. Regino conflated his story of the attack on Nantes in 843 with that of 853; for the latter see F. Lot, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes par les Normands en 853. Critiques des sources', in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2 (Geneva and Paris, 1970), pp. 705-12.

[4] See also Æthelweard, *The Chronicle of Æthelweard (Chronicon Æthelweardi)*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell (London, 1962); *Annals of St Neots*: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition, Volume 17. The Annals of St Neots with Vita Prima Sancti Neoti*, eds. D. Dumville and M. Lapidge (Cambridge, 1985), *s.a.* 842 [=841], p. 42 and notes.

[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 89.

[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 12.

[7] *ASC*, MSS A and E, *s.a.* 839 [*recte* 842], ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 64, 65; *AB* 842: ed. Grat, p. 42; trans. Nelson, p. 53; Nithard: *Histoire des fils de Louis le Pieux*, ed. and trans. P. Lauer (Paris, 1926), I. IV, chap. 3, p. 124; *Carolingian Chronicles, Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories*, trans. B. W. Scholz (Ann Arbor 1972), p. 167. R. Hodges, 'Trade and market origins in the ninth century: Relations between England and the Continent', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* (Aldershot, 1990), pp. 203-23, at p. 216, would identify *Nordhunnwig* as a 'royal estate' close to the coastal community of Hamwic.

had been spared attacks in 842. In terms of the leader responsible for attacking Quentovic and then Southampton, the Frisian-based Dane Harald the Younger can probably be excluded. He had been helping Lothar I in his fight with his brothers, and had received the island of Walcheren as a Frankish benefice in 841 as a reward,[1] and, probably as part of his deal with Lothar, he was with the king's forces on the Moselle in March 842.[2] We cannot completely exclude Rorik, Harald the Younger's brother, from involvement, even though he had been granted the Frisian *emporium* of Dorestad in the time of Louis the Pious, who had died in June 840.[3] Rorik had a long career as a poacher before he turned (on and off) to being a not very reliable Frankish gamekeeper.[4] Finally, we do not know what the historically attested chieftain Reginheri was doing before he attacked Paris in 845; nor if Rorik's cousin Godfrid Haraldsson was already undertaking raids at this time, I think it probable he was.[5] Whether or not it was Oskar who attacked Quentovic and then Southampton,[6] we unfortunately do not know where his fleet wintered in 842-43,[7] although it is possible that the so-called *Chronicle of Nantes* [*CN*] gives us a hint.

The sack of Nantes in 843

The basic facts of the sack of Nantes in June 843 can be easily told. Prudentius in the so-called *Annals of Saint-Bertin* says:

> Pyrate Nordomandorum urbem Namnetum adgressi, interfectis episcopo et multis clericorum atque laicorum sexusque promiscui, depraedata ciuitate, inferiores Aquitaniae partes depopulaturi adoriuntur. Ad postremum insulam quondam ingressi, conuectis a continenti domibus, hiemare uelut perpetuis sedibus statuerunt.[8]

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[1] *AB* 841: ed. Grat, p. 39; trans. Nelson, p. 51.
[2] Nithard: ed. Lauer, pp. 114, 122; trans. Scholz, p. 164. After which we lose track of him; he died sometime before 850.
[3] *Annals of Fulda* [hereafter *AF*] 850: ed. Kurze, p. 39; trans. Reuter, p. 30; *AB* 850: ed. Grat, p. 59; trans. Nelson, p. 69.
[4] Cf. S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers'.
[5] Our sources are probably not complete regarding all these years, nevertheless these are the options as we have them.
[6] Was it just a coincidence that after attacking Quentovic in May 842 the Northmen sailed to the *emporium* of Hamwic (Southampton) and plundered it, a place where they (whether the same ones or not) had suffered a defeat two years before?
[7] As well as over the winter of 841 to 842. Given that contemporary annals say that the Northmen overwintered for the first time in England in 850-51 (cf. *ASC s.a.* 851), and, supposedly but not explicitly, in France in 843 (*AB* 843: ed. Grat, p. 44; trans. Nelson, p. 56), they might have returned home to Scandinavia or possibly Frisia for these winters.
[8] *AB* 843: ed. Grat, p. 44.

> Northmen pirates attacked Nantes, slew the bishop and many clergy and lay people of both sexes, and sacked the *civitas*. Then they attacked the western parts of Aquitaine to devastate them too. Finally, they landed on a certain island, brought their households over from the mainland and decided to winter there in something like a permanent settlement.[1]

In the preface to his second book of the *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, Ermentarius, who had been a monk on Noirmoutier until 836 but who wrote his second book of miracles in about 864 while at Messais (dep. Vienne), tells us that in 843 Northmen came in sixty-seven ships into the estuary of the Loire ('Nortmannorum naves sexaginta septem repentio Ligeris') in an 'unexpected' raid and took the town of Nantes and massacred by the sword the clergy and a great number of people; those who remained were led into captivity.[2] The *Chronicle of Fontenelle* says simply: 'Nannetes urbem depopulati sunt Nortmanni, et Guntbardum episcopum martyrizauerunt', 'The Northmen ravaged the city of Nantes and martyred Bishop Gunthard'.[3] We are also lucky that a long ninth-century account of the sack of Nantes survives, probably based on eyewitness testimony.[4] It was discovered by Bertrand d'Argentré in the abbey of Saint-Serge in Angers and first published in the late sixteenth century. Using these and other reliable sources[5] Coupland excellently summarises what happened:

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[1] *AB* 843: trans. Nelson, pp. 55-56. This is Nelson's translation of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, about which I will say more below. For all the sources concerning the sack of Nantes see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 92-93, n. 1. For the attack in general see *inter alia*: *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chaps. 4-7, pp. 10-22; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve (840-877)* (Paris, 1909), p. 79; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 319-28; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 15-18; *idem*, 'En marge des incursions vikings', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 98.3 (1991), pp. 261-72; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 14-17; *idem*, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', pp. 191-93.

[2] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, pp. 59-60; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 131.

[3] *ChrFont s.a.* 843: ed. Laporte, p. 79; trans. Coupland

[4] Angers, Bibl. mun., ms. 817, fol. 135-36 r. Reproduced in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou recueilles et publiées pour la Société de l'histoire de France* 6, eds. P. Marchegay and É. Mabille (Paris, 1869), pp. 129-32; *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 6, pp. 14-18, and *Cartulaire noir de la cathédrale d'Angers*, ed. C. Urseau (Paris, 1908), no. 40, pp. 87-89. See also P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 191 and nn. 1-7, p. 192 and nn. 1-5, p. 193, pp. 319-28. That it is a near contemporary account is shown by the expression *usque in presentem interdicti regis annum*. For differing views on its precise dating within the third quarter of the ninth century compare R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 14, n. 1, p. 17, n. 1; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, p. 80, n. 3; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois* (Rennes, 1984), p. 260; D. N. Dumville, 'Images of the Viking in Eleventh-Century Latin Literature', in M. W. Herren, C. J. McDonough, and R. G. Arthur (eds.), *Latin Literature Latin Culture in the Eleventh Century*, *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Medieval Latin Studies (Cambridge, 9-12 September 1998)* (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 250-63, at p. 255, n. 25.

[5] As well as those already mentioned these reliable sources include the *Annals of Angoulême* (*AAng s.a.* 843, p. 486) and Adrevald of Fleury's *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: *Les miracles de saint Benoît écrits par Adrevald, Aimoin, André Raoul Tortaire et Hugues de Sainte-Marie, moines de Fleury*, ed. E. de Certain (Paris, 1858), chap. 33, pp. 70-71.

> At the time, Nantes was under the control of Count Lambert, an ally of the Bretons, who had killed Charles the Bald's count, Rainald, at the battle of Messac the previous month [...]. The townspeople were given warning of the approach of the Viking fleet by the monks of Indre, an island monastery a short distance downriver from Nantes, who fled to the town with their treasure. The gate was barricaded, and the people of Nantes no doubt trusted in their stout Gallo-Roman ramparts. Any such confidence was misplaced, however, for the Vikings soon scaled the walls and broke down the gates. Then, seeing the enemy within the city, the terrified populace, including the bishop, raced for the cathedral, perhaps because they hoped to be spared within the sanctuary of its precincts, but more likely because it represented the strongest building in the city, whose doors could be barred against the assailants. Yet even this refuge offered little defence: the Vikings smashed open the doors and broke in the windows, and bursting into the sanctuary, put many of the occupants to the sword. They did not kill everybody, however, for there was economic advantage to be gained by taking prisoners, who could either be ransomed or sold as slaves. The survivors were consequently carted off in chains to the waiting ships, both men and women. Young and old. They were ransomed five days later, when the Vikings made their way back downstream, though it is unfortunately not reported who paid what was presumably a significant sum. The raiders also carried off whatever loot they could find in the city.[1]

In regard to the route taken by the Northmen on their way to Nantes, the ninth-century 'eyewitness' account, which I will call the Angers fragment, says just: 'Normannorum ferox natio, numerosa classe advecti, Ligerium fluvium, qui inter novam Britanniam et ultimos Aquitaniae fines in occiduum mergitur Oceanum ingrediuntur. Deinde, dato classibus zephiro,

[1] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', p. 192. According to the *Chronicle of Nantes* (*La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 4, pp. 8-11), Nominoë and Lambert had started to march south towards Nantes. Count Rainald, possibly on Charles the Bald's orders, moved north to meet them. Near the town of Messac on the river Vilaine, which divides the Nantais and the Vannetaise, Rainald came across half the Breton force under Nominoë's son Erispoë, which had just crossed the river. He attacked, and the Bretons fled. Rainald then moved to the nearby little river Isac (a tributary of the Vilaine), near the village of Blain (Loire-Atlantique), where his warriors rested. Lambert had not been at the Messac fight because he was waiting to meet some other Bretons. But he joined forces with Erispoë and they soon found and massacred Rainald and most of his nobles at Blain. Rainald's army, it seems, had been resting unarmed by the river! The *Chronicle of Nantes* (*La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, p. 18) adds that during this raid on Nantes the Northmen had also attacked the *vicos* and *castella* of Herbauge, Tiffauge and Mauges, three *pagi* lying south and southeast of Nantes, which were the patrimony of Count Rainald of Herbauge who had been killed in May 843 at the hands of Count Lambert (see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 259-62). R. Merlet (*La chronique de Nantes*, pp. XLI-XLII) argued that chapters 7, 8 and even chapter 10 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* derived from the same original source as the Angers fragment included as his chapter 6. This is not sure and as P. Bauduin (*Le monde franc*, p. 325) says we really need a new edition of the *Chronicle of Nantes* integrating the fragments conserved in the manuscript of Saint-Serge at Angers. See also J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 45-47.

ad urbem Namneticam [...]'.[1] That is that numerous ships had brought the ferocious nation of the Northmen to the river Loire, which is entered from the western Ocean between new Brittany and the furthest limits of Aquitaine, and then a west wind had brought their ships to Nantes. At the beginning of the tenth century, Regino of Prüm wrote in his *Chronicle* that 'Nortmanni Brittannicum mare navigio girantes ostia Ligeris fluminis occupaverunt', 'Northmen went round Brittany by sea and occupied the mouth of the River Loire'.[2] Less reliable for sure is chapter 5 of the so-called *Chronicle of Nantes*.[3] The *Chronicle of Nantes* was written or compiled in about 1050-59 by a canon of Nantes who made use of many earlier annals from Nantes and Brittany, plus other now lost charters.[4] The original manuscript has been lost but it has been reconstructed by René Merlet from later copies/translations. It provides us with more information of interest not only for the history of Nantes but also for the activities of the Northmen in Aquitaine. In chapter 5, although the chronicler/compiler jumps forward and back a couple of times, his overall story is quite clear. He says[5] that *Normannos* and *Danos*[6] who had made frequent raids along the maritime coasts situated at the 'limits/borders (*fines*) of Gaul', which here I suggest can only mean Flanders and Frisia,[7] and in 'Neustria', which must be referring to the attack of 841 up the Seine led by Oskar, were desirous to come to Nantes of whose wealth they had heard. According to the chronicler it was the Frankish count Lambert

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[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 6, p. 15. The term 'New Brittany' started to be used after the treaty of Angers in late 851 when the Breton duke Erispoë was granted the lands his father Nominoë had held plus Rennes, Nantes and the *pays de Retz* by Charles the Bald: see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois* p. 286; J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duche du Maine et la marche de Bretagne', in H. Atsma (ed.), *La Neustrie - Les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850*, *Beihefte der Francia*, 16.1 (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 29-127, at p. 82; *AB* 851: ed. Grat, pp. 63-64; trans. Nelson, p. 73; R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 15, n. 1. These extra lands became known as 'New Brittany'.

[2] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 76; trans. MacLean, p. 133

[3] Chapter 5 is less reliable because unlike chapter 6 (and perhaps some other chapters according to Merlet) it was written/compiled in the mid-eleventh century, and because it implicates Count Lambert, which appears to be a later legendary development (see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 322-24; S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', pp. 192-93). It also includes at the end the detail that Bishop Gunthard of Nantes was killed at the altar while taking the festal mass and saying the words *Sursum corda* (Lift up your hearts), which also appears in the works of Létald of Micy from the end of the 10th to the beginning of the 11th century (cf. Létald of Micy, *Miracles of Saint Mesmin of Micy*: *Miracula sancti Maximi abbatis Maciacensis*, ed. J. P. Migne, *PL*, 137 (Paris, 1879), chap. 3, cols. 795-823, at col. 804; Létald of Micy, *Miracles of Saint-Martin of Vertou*: *Miracula sancti Martini abbatis Vertavensis*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH*, *SRM*, 3 (Hanover, 1896), pp. 564-75, at chap. 8, p. 573), suggesting a tradition had developed in Nantes about these events. J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 46, accepts these later traditions as fact.

[4] R. Merlet (*La chronique de Nantes*, pp. XL-LXI) showed that the Nantes chronicler/compiler drew on many earlier annals and chronicles from Nantes, Tours and Redon.

[5] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 5, pp. 11-13.

[6] For some very useful discussions of the use of the terms 'Danes' and 'Northmen' see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6; S. Polzer, *Die Franken und der Norden*; I. Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the *gens Danorum*'.

[7] As mentioned in Chapter 2 there were no raids in Brittany in these years, except perhaps for a strange reference to one under the year 837 in the *Annals of Saint-Florent of Saumur*: '*Normanni vastant Britanniam*' (cf. *Recueil d'annales angevines et vendômoises*, ed. L. Halphen, p. 113). The many raids in the 830s and in 841 in Frisia and Flanders are well documented.

who had induced them to come. Arriving from the *mare Oceanum*, which means the Atlantic all the way from Brittany to Spain,[1] they had then sailed along/around the coasts of 'new Brittany' (*Britanniam novam circumirent*), which runs from the south of the Breton/Armorican peninsula to the mouth of the Loire. Sometime during this journey, they had assembled together an abundance of ships (*ingentum navium copiam*) from many regions (*ex multis regionibus*); ships which were filled with a multitude of very cruel men (*de turbis crudelisimorum virorum*). They had then managed to navigate through/along the jagged coastline of Brittany (*per angulos Britanniae navigabant*) and arrived on the *insula* of Batz in southern (new) Brittany. The island of Batz (Batz-sur-Mer) is now part of the peninsula of Guérande near present-day Saint-Nazaire, north of the bay of Bourgneuf and close to the entrance to the Loire. It was from Batz that the Northmen entered the Loire and attacked Nantes. Although we need to be cautious, and leaving aside the debatable and much debated involvement of Count Lambert in all this,[2] the route taken by the Northmen from the *mare Oceanum* through the many *anglets* of Brittany to the island of Batz is both logical and coherent. How else would they have come to Nantes?

All the foregoing does not definitively prove that the Northmen who sacked Nantes had come from the Seine in Neustria and/or earlier from Flanders/Frisia, or even from Scandinavia, but the chronicler of Nantes does seem to mention these places as having been several times attacked by the 'Northmen and Danes' who had sacked the town. But that they came around the Breton peninsula from the North is clear. Vogel summed up his opinion:

> Die Normannen, denen dieser Schlag geglückt war, kamen aus dem Kanal, da mehere Berichte versichern, daß sie Bretagne umsegelten. Sie werden als Westfaldingi bezeichnet; ihre heimat war also das Westfold (Wiken).[3]

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[1] Allen says they came from the 'Britannic Ocean' (*The Poet and the Spae-wife*, p. 7), which he wrongly equated with the 'Irish Sea'. The *Chronicle of Nantes* says they came from the *mare Oceanum*. It is Regino of Prüm's *Chronicon* (ed. Kurze, p. 76) *s.a.* 853 that says 'Britannic Sea', '*Brittannicum mare*'. Here Regino conflates the attacks on Nantes in 853 and 843, and 'Britannic Sea' means here the 'Breton Sea' and not the Irish Sea. For a full discussion of this term see P. Marquand, '*Mare britannicum*'. S. MacLean rightly translates the passage as: 'Northmen went round Brittany by sea and occupied the mouth of the River Loire' (*History and politics*, p. 133).

[2] For different opinions on Lambert's involvement or not compare F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, pp. 79-81 n. 3; R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 13, n. 1, p. 20, n. 1; S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', pp. 191-93; *idem*, 'Holy Ground? The Plundering and Burning of Churches by Vikings and Franks in the Ninth Century', pp. 73-97**;** J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire: Brittany and the Carolingians* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 94; N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 23; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 91 and n. 1, p. 93 and n. 2; J.-C. Cassard, 'Les Vikings à Nantes', in A. Croix (ed.), *Nantes dans l'histoire de France* (Nantes, 1991), pp. 31-40; *idem*, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 17-18; *idem*, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 45-47; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne,* p. 324, n. 55; E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des Ostfränkischen Reiches, Ludwig der Deutsche, bis zum Frieden von Koblenz, 860,* vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1887), pp. 198-99. The best recent and nuanced assessment of the question is found in P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 319-28.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 95.

The Northmen who had succeeded in this attack came from the Channel, as many reports assure us that they sailed round Brittany. They were called Westfaldingi; their homeland was thus Vestfold (Viken).[1]

Westfaldingi

This conclusion provides the opportunity to get to the heart of this study: who were the *Westfaldingi* and how had they come to the Loire and to Aquitaine?

As was noted earlier, the local *Annals of Angoulême* (*Annales Engolismenses*) and the later derivative Limousin version called the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* (*Chronicon Aquitanicum*) say that the Northmen who sacked Nantes were *Westfaldingi*.[2] It was also mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that over the years this has led many historians and numismatists to suggest that they had come from Ireland. This is generally based on the view that as Vestfold is in present-day south-western Norway, on the west side of the Oslo fjord,[3] which when coupled with the general belief that the early Scandinavians in Ireland were 'Norwegian' means, according to this view, that any fleet of *Westfaldingi* must therefore have had an Irish provenance. But is this true? I will argue it is not. Just because Vestfold is in 'Norway' and 'Norwegians' were thought to operate in Ireland, it clearly does not follow that any 'Norwegians' operating anywhere must have had an Irish connection.

If we are to believe the *Chronicle of Nantes* the Northmen had assembled a large fleet from many regions - possibly at an assembly point somewhere in Brittany or even in southern England - before they had felt strong enough to attack Nantes.[4] The contemporary monk Ermentarius said the fleet comprised sixty-seven ships, which is large for the time. In 820, when the Northmen had attacked the island of Bouin in the bay of Bourgneuf, they were said to have

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[1] My translation.

[2] *AAng* 843, p. 486; *ChrAquit* 843, p. 253.

[3] The identification of *Westfald/Westarfolda* with Vestfold in Norway is generally proposed; see just for example I. Skovgaard-Petersen, 'The making of the Danish kingdom', in K. Helle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia,* vol. I, *Prehistory to 1520* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 168-83, at pp. 172-73; P. H. Sawyer, *Da Danmark blev Danmark*, pp. 40-42; M. A. Valante, *The Vikings in Ireland: Settlement, Trade and Urbanization* (Dublin, 2008); J.-C. Cassard, 'Les Vikings à Nantes', pp. 31-40; *idem*, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 17-18; *idem*, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 46-47. Ildar Garipzanov has suggested the 'slight possibility' that it could refer to the region around Ribe in western Jutland (cf. I. Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the *gens Danorum*', p. 134, n. 85). C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7, and elsewhere in earlier works, argues that the 'polity' of Vestfold (perhaps called *Laithlinn* in Irish annals) extended to the western coast of Norway.

[4] Vikings often used assembly points, usually coastal or riverine islands, to collect their forces before making a particular raid. The islets of Thanet and Sheppey in Kent seems to have served this purpose, as did the island of Walcheren in Frisia, the islands of Oissel and Jeufosse on the Seine, and the unnamed Aquitanian island the Northmen used after 843. There were probably others, including in Brittany and maybe, later, in the Channel Islands.

come in just thirteen ships. In 835 on the nearby island of Noirmoutier it is said they came in only nine ships. In 840 at Southampton, we are told there were '33 ship-loads'. But by 845 Reginheri's fleet on the Seine amounted to 120 ships,[1] and in 851 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says the fleet that entered the mouth of the Thames comprised 'three-and-a-half hundred ships',[2] while, also in 851 (incorrectly *s.a.* 852), Prudentius of Troyes says there was a fleet in Frisia consisting of 252 ships.[3] It has long been recognised that from the 840s the Scandinavians started to collect larger fleets together, and from now on the Northmen increasingly had to be bought off by the Frankish and other kings with huge tribute payments.[4]

The evidence of the *Annals of Angoulême* regarding the *Westfaldingi* should be taken very seriously because these are a local and reliable source. If the fleet that attacked Nantes was an assembled one, as the *Chronicle of Nantes* suggests it was, then at least one significant part comprising Scandinavians who called themselves Men of the Westfold or similar is possible, indeed it is almost certain.[5] The Angoulême annalist's information must surely have come originally, directly or indirectly, from a ninth-century eyewitness because how else would he have come across the term *Westfaldingi*.[6] It is a very specific geographic and self-designating term that no cleric or monk in south-western France could have just invented in the ninth century or even later. In fact, there is only one other use of the term found in the whole of the ninth century, and that is the report in the *Royal Frankish Annals* for 813 saying that Harald (Klak) and his brother Reginfrid, two contenders for the Danish throne who had recently

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[1] *AB* 845: ed. Grat, p. 49; trans. Nelson, p. 60.

[2] *ASC* MSS A and E, *s.a.* 851, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 64-65.

[3] *AB* 852 [=851]: ed. Grat, p. 64; trans. Nelson, p. 74. The whole history of the many Northmen who were in Frisia in *c.*851 is extremely complex. But one group of them certainly went to England and fought the English at the battle of *Aclea* in Surrey in 851, for which see *AB* 850 [=851]: ed. Grat, pp. 59-60; trans. Nelson, p. 69, and n. 6; *ASC* MSS A and E, *s.a.* 851, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 64-65. These particular Northmen from Frisia could thereafter have gone to Ireland where they appear in Irish annals later in 851 as 'dark/black foreigners' perhaps under a leader called *Horm* (*Ormr*), for which opinion see A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 71-72; S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 7-8, 23-24. For the Irish context see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap. 7.4.

[4] Cf. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*; *idem*, 'The Frankish tribute payments to the Vikings and their consequences'; E. Joranson, *The Danegeld in France*; F. Lot, 'Les tributs aux normands et l'Église de France au IXe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 85 (1924), pp. 58-78, reprinted in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 3 (1973), pp. 699-719.

[5] All large Scandinavian fleets had to be assembled somewhere, with small contingents arriving from various places to bolster the main force.

[6] I. Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the *gens Danorum*', p. 135 and n. 88, believes that the form *Wesfaldingi* instead of the expected *Westfaldingi* in the *Annals of Angoulême* and the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* is probably explained by the information being transmitted by an eyewitness 'who might have heard the self-designation of the Vikings that attacked Nantes'. See also S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history', p. 191.

attained royal status, went with an army to *Westarfolda* because the *principes* and *populus* there had refused to become subject to them.[1]

We are thus drawn to the conclusion that 'men of the Westfold' did indeed form an important part, probably even the main part, of the Scandinavian force that sacked Nantes in 843. This does not mean that they were necessarily 'Norwegian' in the modern sense of the word. Among others, Dagfinn Skre, the archaeologist of 'viking' Kaupang and Vestfold, has argued that 'Danes' probably held sway in Vestfold at various times during the ninth century.[2] He says: 'Danish rule in Vestfold was not merely an episode in the very early 9th century but rather continued until the middle or even the end of that century',[3] although this opinion is not unchallenged.[4] Additionally, it certainly does not imply, as so many have confidently suggested it does, that these particular *Westfaldingi* must have come from Ireland.

Coupland's theory that the Northmen responsible for the sack of Nantes in 843 had come from Ireland is (as he acknowledges) an extension of Vogel's opinion about the origin of the first Scandinavian raids in Aquitaine in the early decades of the ninth century.[5] Vogel's conjecture was that except for the raid in 820 on the island of Bouin, in the bay of Bourgneuf near the mouth of the Loire,[6] all the other raids on Noirmoutier (also in the same bay) from the 810s through to the 830s were not recorded in the *Royal Frankish Annals* and, as there were no reports of raiders landing in England or on the 'North Sea coasts' in these years which they would have been if the Aquitanian raiders in these years had gone back to 'Denmark or Norway' each winter, this suggests that 'these Vikings came from Ireland and returned there', 'diese

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[1] *ARF* 813, ed. Kurze, p. 102; *RFA* 813, trans. Scholz, p. 96.
[2] D. Skre, *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, pp. 461-68.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 467.
[4] See C. Etchingham, 'The location of historical Laithlinn/Lochla(i)nn: Scotland or Scandinavia', in M. Ó Flaithearta (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica, Studia Celtica Upsaliensia*, 6 (Uppsala, 2007), pp. 11-31; *idem*, 'Names for the Vikings in Irish Annals', in J. V. Sigurðsson and T. Bolton (eds.), *Celtic-Norse Relationships in the Irish Sea in the Middle Ages 800-1200*, *The Northern World Series*, 65 (Leiden and Boston, 2014), pp. 23-38; *idem*, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7, argues against this view.
[5] With the exception of the attack on Bouin in 820, of which S. Coupland says (*Charles the Bald*, p. 7): 'In 820, a Viking fleet was prevented from landing in Flanders and at the mouth of the Seine, but eventually plundered the island of Bouin in Aquitaine', Coupland (*Charles the Bald*, p. 8) explicitly follows Vogel (*Die Normannen*, pp. 64-65) in saying of all the other attacks on Noirmoutier in the first half of the ninth century that: 'It seems likely that the fleets responsible for these attacks were Norwegians sailing from Ireland, who consequently aroused no comment in the northern Frankish annals because they did not pass along the North Sea or Channel coasts, unlike the Danish raiders of 820. In this context it is significant that the raiders who sacked Nantes in 843 were *Westfaldingi*, that is from Vestfold in Norway.' The link between Ireland and Vestfold is already made. For a discussion of these early Scandinavian raids in France see S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France' and Chapter 2.
[6] See W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 64-65. Vogel also believed (*ibid*., p. 62) the attack in 820 came from Denmark (as do I), but says the Northmen might have then moved on to Ireland (*ibid*., p. 65), which is at least possible.

Wikinger von Irland kamen und sich dorthin zurückzogen'.[1] Coupland takes Vogel's conjecture a step further by saying that 'the Vikings who raided Nantes were described as "Westfaldingi", Norwegians from west of the Oslo fjord, and it is therefore probable that they came from Ireland'.[2] He adds in more recent correspondence that on the basis of Vogel's opinions regarding the Irish origin of these earlier raids 'it is quite plausible that the attack of 843 - the first penetration of the river [Loire] - had the same origin', that is Ireland. Vogel did not take this extra step. His view was that the *Westfaldingi* who attacked Nantes had come 'from the Channel', by which he means from the North Sea,[3] and had sailed round Brittany and thus that they had come from Vestfold.[4] This is a view I have argued is correct. It is also supported by the Irish evidence which Etchingham sums up as follows: 'While intriguing there is no evidence for an Irish origin for the Vikings of the Atlantic seaboard.'[5]

The Northmen in Aquitaine 843-849

We can now turn to the subsequent activities of the Northmen in Aquitaine in the six years after the sack of Nantes. In terms of the Mullaghboden coins, the point of this is that it will demonstrate that the 'one' Scandinavian fleet did not go to Ireland in the period 846-848 as Allen and Dolley maintained.

Nantes had been sacked in June 843, at Count Lambert's instigation or not. Having left the town the *Chronicle of Nantes* says that the Northmen arrived on the island of Noirmoutier in the bay of Bourgneuf with their unlucky prisoners in tow. Whilst there they started to argue violently among themselves about the division of the spoils, which led to some deaths among the Northmen. This gave some of the prisoners the chance to escape through secret places known to them.[6] According to Prudentius, having left Nantes the Northmen had then attacked the more southerly parts of Aquitaine (*inferioris Aquitaniae partes*)[7] and, finally, they landed 'on a certain island' (*insulam quandum*), and 'brought their households over from the mainland

[1] *Ibid*., pp. 64-65. But actually, as Clare Downham has recently demonstrated, 'early viking activity in England was more extensive than the common stock of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle allows': C. Downham 'The Earliest Viking Activity in England', p. 12.
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 16.
[3] That this is what Vogel meant is quite clear when we compare his use of exactly the same expression regarding the attack in 799 on the 'islands off the coast of Aquitaine' (cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 51).
[4] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[5] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6. Although I am of the same opinion as Etchingham regarding the origin of the Northmen at Nantes in 843, I think he is going a little too far here. Some of the early raids in Aquitaine might have originated in Ireland, and later ones certainly did.
[6] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, pp. 18-19. R. Merlet (*La chronique de Nantes*, pp. 20-21, n. 3) and J.-C. Cassard (*Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 17) identify these secret places as 'le passage du Gois'.
[7] Janet Nelson (*AB* 843: trans. Nelson, p. 56) translates this as 'western parts of Aquitaine'; southern or lower parts would seem more apt.

and decided to winter there in something like a permanent settlement'.[1] This probably means they built a winter camp or possibly, given Prudentius's words, a more permanent defended ship-base where they might conceivably base themselves for some years. This 'certain island' has traditionally been identified as Noirmoutier because we know the Northmen went there after sacking Nantes.[2] But if we read Prudentius's words closely they clearly imply an island lying further south,[3] such as the Île de Ré or even the Île d'Oléron or one of the myriad of other islands or islets still existing at this time along the coast of Aunis and the Saintonge.[4] The fact that these same Northmen returned to attack and burn the monastery on Noirmoutier again in 846 also points in this direction,[5] because why would they have to attack a place again where they had been 'settled' for three years? To this we can add the fact that chapter 7 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* actually says that after dividing the spoils on Noirmoutier the Northmen had then soon departed on their ships but a violent north wind had pushed them south and that they ended up in Galicia in Christian northern Spain.[6] They did, but as Prudentius tells us it was not directly but by way of Toulouse:

> Nordomanni per Garonnam Tolosam usque proficiscentes, praedas passim inpuneque perficiunt. Unde regressi quidam Galliciaque adgressi, partim ballistariorum occursu partim tempestate maris intercepti dispereunt. Sed et quidam eorum ulteriores Hispaniae partes adorsi, diu acriterque cum Saracenis dimicantes, tandem uicti resiliunt.[7]

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[1] *AB* 843: ed. Grat, p. 44; trans. Nelson, p. 56.

[2] See, to name only a few, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 94-95, 116, 118; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 18; M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences', pp. 250-51; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, pp. 81, 186, 187; J. L. Nelson, 'The Frankish Empire', p. 26.

[3] See also S. Coupland, 'The Vikings on the Continent', p. 187; S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France', p. 123.

[4] See C. Treffort, 'Iles et moines du littoral atlantique entre Loire et Gironde au Moyen Âge', in Y. Codou and M. Lauwers (eds.), *Lérins, une île sainte de l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge*, *Actes du colloque de Nice et Lérins, 22-24 juin 2006* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 319-34, esp. p. 321: 'Une grande partie des marais maritimes aujourd'hui asséchés étaient au Moyen Âge des espaces d'eau. C'est le cas en particulier du marais poitevin, vers l'anse de l'Aiguillon.' Historians also sometimes assert that 843 was the first time the Northmen over-wintered in Aquitaine, or even in France, although this is not stated by Prudentius and does rather beg the question of which 'mainland' Prudentius meant when he wrote that the Northmen's households (*domibus*) came over from the mainland to the island to join their men-folk. The only report of a raid on the Île de Ré around this time is from the late forgery called the *Charter of Alaon* (cf. *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 8, ed. M. Bouquet (Paris, 1871), p. 472). The Bordeaux archaeologist Jean Chapelot believes that this 'certain island' was the Île de Ré and that the abbey there was destroyed by the Northmen when they arrived in 843 after leaving Nantes; cf. J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg', p. 182. Cf. also S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France', p. 115, n. 15.

[5] *AAng* 846, p. 486; *ChrAquit* 846, p. 253.

[6] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, p. 20.

[7] *AB* 844: ed. Grat, p. 49.

> The Northmen sailed up the Garonne as far as Toulouse, wreaking destruction everywhere, without meeting any opposition. Then some of them withdrew from there and attacked Galicia, but they perished partly because they met resistance from missile throwers, partly because they were caught in a storm at sea. Some of them though, got to the south-western part [*sic*] of Spain, where they fought long and bitterly with the Saracens, but were finally beaten and withdrew to their ships.[1]

The chronicler of Nantes does not mention Toulouse or Muslim Spain, just Galicia. Nevertheless, from whichever earlier source he got this information it clearly shows a memory in Nantes that the Northmen who had sacked the town had then gone on to Spain. Of course, whether the Northmen who had attacked Nantes had then wintered on Noirmoutier or, more likely for the reasons which have been given, on a more southerly island such as the Île de Ré or Île d'Oléron, both of which lie just north of the mouth of the Gironde leading to Bordeaux and the Garonne, they would have had to sail past Bordeaux to get to Toulouse, although it seems the town was left untouched - for now.[2]

In early May 844, Charles the Bald had come with a small force to besiege the walled city of Toulouse - it was part of his ongoing struggle with his nephew Pippin II of Aquitaine. He stayed there at least until the end of June. But on 14 June a Frankish army which had been coming to reinforce him was heavily defeated by Pippin II in the county of Angoulême. Charles broke off the siege and left, probably by early July.[3] It was probably a little after Charles left Toulouse that the Northmen arrived. This was 'hardly by coincidence', as Janet Nelson says,[4] although what type of lack of coincidence it may have been is not explored.[5] The Northmen did not stay long at Toulouse, and by early August some of them were in northern Spain. What is not usually noticed is that Prudentius says that 'some of them withdrew from there and attacked

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[1] *AB* 844: trans. Nelson, p. 60.

[2] This is discussed more in Chapter 8. I would just state here that Annie Dumont *et el.* are probably wrong to say that 'Ils [the Northmen] s'installent dans la région [of the Charente at Taillebourg] au début du mois de juillet 844 et, après un premier échec devant Bordeaux, incendient Saintes, à quinze kilomètres seulement en amont de Taillebourg, à l'automne 845': see A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, and J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente? Le témoignage de l'archéologie', p. 48. The chronology might very roughly work here because the Northmen seem to have arrived at Toulouse in July 844 (a fact and event which Dumont *et al.* never mention in any of their many fine works), but there is simply no evidence that before they went to Toulouse these Northmen had 'installed themselves' on the Charente near Saintes (which they only did for a time in 845 after returning from Iberia), and certainly not that they had suffered a 'premier échec devant Bordeaux'.

[3] For these events in 844 involving Pippin II, and their context, see *inter alia AB* 844: ed. Grat, pp. 46-47; trans. Nelson, p. 58; *AX* 844: ed. von Simson, p. 13; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London, 1992), pp. 137-44; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, pp. 113-17; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 177-215.

[4] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 144.

[5] H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, pp. 111-12, believed that Pippin II was already in league with the Northmen, as he certainly was later on; see also L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 324-25; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 328-37.

Galicia', 'Unde regressi quidam Galliciamque adgressi'.[1] 'Some of them' would quite clearly indicate that the fleet split up at Toulouse. One group went on the Spain while the other, we can reasonably infer, stayed a little longer in southern Aquitaine.[2]

The question is which was which? Vogel,[3] followed closely by Coupland,[4] believed that Oskar had not gone to Spain. This opinion is based on a report of the death in Seville of the Northmen's 'general' in the *Al-Bayan al-Mughrib*, written in the early fourteenth century in Marrakech by Ibn Idhāri. This story says that

> Abd al-Rahmān wrote to the Sinhaja tribe in Tangier, to tell them that with God's help he had succeeded in destroying Vikings [*sic*]. At the same time he sent them the heads of the general and of two hundred of the noblest Viking [*sic*] warriors.[5]

But as Ann Christys says, 'there is little justification for adding details from Ibn Idhāri's version of the attacks on al-Andalus to modern narratives of the Vikings' activities in Iberia'.[6] The fact is we simply do not know whether Oskar led the part of the fleet that went to Spain or if he had stayed for a while in southern Aquitaine while another chieftain led the expedition to Spain.

I will not attempt to retell all we know of this first Scandinavian raid on Christian and Muslim Iberia in late 844. Christys has recently done this admirably in her book *Vikings in the South*, drawing on all Christian and Muslims sources as had some earlier historians.[7] In summary, the Northmen first made landfall in early August 844 in Gijon in Asturias before moving on to *Farum Brecantium* in Galicia - probably the lighthouse at La Coruña. Here the Galicians, who might have been led by king Ramiro, fought them and destroyed many of their ships 'with fire'.[8] But some escaped and went on to Muslim Iberia - first besieging Muslim Lisbon in September and then heading further south where they entered the city of Seville

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[1] *AB* 844: ed. Grat, p. 49; trans. Nelson, p. 60.

[2] There are several late and rather unreliable and undated reports of Northmen raiding in Gascony south of the Gironde and the Garonne which tell of the destruction of many towns and monasteries. These have sometimes been dated to this period (see, for example, R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 97-99; J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, pp. 26-27). While I do certainly think there were Scandinavian attacks in this region in the ninth/tenth centuries, dating these particular late reports to the mid-840s is simply arbitrary, particularly given the rather brief nature of the Northmen's incursion to Toulouse in 844. Some of these reported attacks in Gascony, if they happened at all, may be more reasonably placed in 848-49, 855 or 864. We will explore these questions in much greater detail in subsequent chapters.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 121 and n. 2.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.

[5] Quoted in A. Christys, *Vikings in the South: Voyages to Iberia and the Mediterranean* (London, 2015), pp. 41-42.

[6] *Ibid*., p. 42.

[7] *Ibid*. pp. 29-45; See also N. S. Price, 'The Vikings in Spain, North Africa and the Mediterranean', in S. Brink and N. Price (eds.), *The Viking World* (London, 2008), pp. 462-69.

[8] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 32.

(supposedly in October) and 'annihilated many bands of Chaldeans' [Muslims].[1] They seem to have stayed in al-Andalus for a couple of months, making raids and, if the Muslim sources are to be believed, also suffering heavy casualties, particularly at the battle of *Talyata* near Seville on 17 November. They seem to have then left the Guadalquivir in al-Andalus but raided Niebla and Lisbon on the way back. We are not told what then became of them. Most historians confidently assume they returned to Aquitaine.[2] In order to tell a good story Allen conjectured that on their way back to Aquitaine 'they had wintered and spent the spring refitting in one of the lonely *rias* of the Galician coast',[3] which could well be true but there is no real evidence for it.

The *Chronicle of Nantes* says that while in Galicia the Northmen who had left Nantes had been met by the Galicians who had assembled their forces and defended themselves, and they had killed many of the Northmen - except for 30 ships.[4] Missing out the subsequent trip to Muslim Iberia, the Nantes chronicler then says the Northmen arrived back at Bordeaux and pillaged its province and then they sailed all the way to Saintes (dep. Charente-Maritime) ('*naviguverunt usque Santonas*') which they captured and greatly pillaged.[5] The veracity of the Nantes chronicler is confirmed by the earlier Prudentius of Troyes who wrote: 'Dani qui anno praeterito Aquitaniam uastauerunt, remeantes Santonas inuadunt, confligentes superant quietisque sedibus immorantur', 'The Danes, who had ravaged Aquitaine the year before, returned and attacked Saintonge. They won the fight, and settled down there to stay quietly for a while'.[6]

The *Annals of Angoulême* say that 'Count Siguin was captured and killed by the Northmen', and that 'the town of Saintes was burned and its treasures taken away', 'Sigoinus comis a Normannis capitur et occiditur. Sanctonas civitas concrematur et tesaurius exportantur obtimi'.[7]

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] See by way of example W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 117; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve (840-877)* (Paris, 1909), pp. 186-87; M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 251; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 26; *idem*, 'A hoard of Charles the Bald (840-77) and Pippin II (845-8): Poitou-Charentes (FR), n.d.', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 175 (2015), pp. 273-84, pl. 37-40, at p. 280.
[3] W. E. D. Allen, *The Poet and the Spae-wife*, p. 9,
[4] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, p. 20.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *AB* 845: ed. Grat, p. 51; trans. Nelson, p. 62.
[7] *AAng* 845, p. 486. Quite explicitly following Lot and Halphen who say, 'Une crise intérieure de l'état danois les [the Northmen] rappela, dans leur pays. Ils firent voile pour la Baltique en juillet 846 après avoir incendié leur camp de Noirmoutier', 'An interior crisis in the Danish state recalled [the Northmen] to their country. They made sail for the Baltic in July 846 after having burned their Noirmoutier camp' (see *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, p. 187), which incidentally is exactly from where Allen and Dolley got their idea, Marcel Garaud ('Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 351) says, after mentioning the 'sack' of Saintes in 845: 'L'année suivante, des événements inconnus semblant les avoir rappelés en Scandinavie. Ils partirent en juillet 846 après avoir incendié l'île de Noirmoutier et détruit le monastère de Saint-Philibert', 'The following year unknown events seem to have recalled them to Scandinavia. They departed in July 846 after having burned the island of Noirmoutier and

Between 12 and 22 November 845,[1] Lupus, the abbot of Ferrières (dep. Loiret), wrote to Wenilo, the archbishop of Sens, telling him that it had been reported to him by people coming from Aquitaine that 'in these days', which means late October or early November, or slightly before, Northmen had made an onslaught between Bordeaux and Saintes. The Christians had fought a battle on foot but had been slaughtered miserably, except for those who saved themselves by flight. Lupus added that he also had sworn testimony that Siguin was captured and killed.[2] The fact that Prudentius states that these 'Danes' had returned from attacking 'Aquitaine' the year before links them with the trip down the Garonne to Toulouse in 844, however it does not explicitly link them with that part of the fleet at Toulouse that had gone on to raid in Spain as is often inferred. If Prudentius had known of such a link he would probably have said so as did Archbishop Hincmar, his successor in writing the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, after the second Scandinavian expedition to Spain and the Mediterranean in 858/59-61, when he reported some Danes in Brittany in early 862 'who had been in Spain'.[3] We know from Prudentius that the Scandinavian fleet split at Toulouse in the summer of 844 and that only a part of it went on to Iberia. As was mentioned earlier we can reasonably infer the other part stayed in Aquitaine. That the Northmen from 'Aquitaine' only arrived in the Saintonge in about October or early November 845 might also suggest that it was these Northmen who returned. If it had been the Northmen who had attacked Spain who had arrived in the Saintonge towards the end of 845 then what had they been doing between the beginning and end of the year?[4]

Saintes was a former Roman town. It was an interesting target because not only was it strategically and economically important, but also because only in June of the same year Charles the Bald and his nephew Pippin II had met at the monastery of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, at Fleury just upstream of Orléans, and come to an agreement whereby Pippin was allowed the

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destroyed the monastery of Saint-Philibert'. This view is completely unsubstantiated and is ultimately incorrect. Lot and Halphen's presumption here is based very explicitly (*ibid*., p.187, n. 5; p. 186, n. 1) on a reference to the *Chronicle of Nantes* (see *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, p. 20) which says that after the sack of Nantes in 843 the Northmen had wanted to return to their own region (but they had actually been pushed south to Galicia), coupled with the reference in the *Chronicon Aquitanicum* that Noirmoutier had been burned in 846. But this is all so incoherent that I will leave it here.

[1] L. Levillain, 'Étude sur les lettres de Loup de Ferrières', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 62 (1901), pp. 445-509; 63 (1902), pp. 69-118, at pp. 73-75.

[2] Lupus of Ferrières: *Loup de Ferrières*, *Correspondance*, 2 vols, ed. and trans. L. Levillain (Paris, 1927-35), vol. 1, *Ep*. no. 44, p. 186: 'Quidam vero de Aquitania venientes Nortmannos inter Burdegalam et Sanctonas eruptionem his diebus fecisse retulerunt et nostros, id est christianos, pedestri cum eis proelio congressos et miserabiliter, nisi quos fuga eripere potuit, peremptos. In quo bello comprehensum ducem Vasconum Siguinum et peremptum etiam jurando testati sunt. Quae res, quam vera sit dominica sententia: Omne regnum in seipsum divisum desolabitur, indicat, et discordiam amplectentibus qui fructus maneat manifestat.'

[3] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

[4] It is quite conceivable that in the course of 845 the Northmen after having left Spain had rejoined the others who had stayed behind in Aquitaine although we cannot be sure.

lordship of the 'whole of Aquitaine, except for Poitou, Saintonge and Aunis'.[1] In attacking the town of Saintes the Northmen were, theoretically, attacking Charles's territory although this might not have been the reality on the ground. The numismatic evidence strongly suggests that the Saintonge, the Aunis and Poitou, and even perhaps Poitiers itself, were probably still under the authority of Pippin II at this time.[2]

In July 846 it was no doubt the same Northmen who returned to Noirmoutier and burned the monastery: '846. Herus insula mense Iulio a Normannis succenditur.'[3] This is an act that would have made little sense if Noirmoutier had become a semi-permanent base of the Northmen after their sack of Nantes in 843. Saint Philibert's monastery on Noirmoutier had been repeatedly attacked in previous decades, which had led the monks to found a new monastery at Déas, called Saint-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu, in about 814-815,[4] to where the monks would retreat each year to find safety during the raiding season. Eventually, in 836, the monks gave up and moved to Déas, abandoning Noirmoutier forever and taking the bones of Saint Philibert with them.[5] Perhaps it was not a coincidence then that after attacking Noirmoutier, the very next year, on 29 March 847, the monastery at Déas itself was burned: '847. Normanni 4. Kal. Apr. Dius monasterium incendunt.'[6] The Northmen did other things in the area as well. Under the year 847, but clearly telling of events in both 846 and 847, Prudentius says:

> Dani partem inferioris Galliae quam Brittones incolunt adeuntes, ter cum eisdem bellantes, superant; Nomenogiusque uictis cum suis fugit, dein lenitos muneribus a suis eos sedibus amouit.[7]

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[1] *AB* 845: ed. Grat, p. 50; trans. Nelson, p. 61 and nn. 4 and 5; *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France*, 3 vols, eds. G. Tessier, A. Giry, and M. Prou (Paris, 1943-55) [hereafter *RAC*], vol. 1, no. 71.

[2] See S. Coupland, 'The coinages of Pippin I and II of Aquitaine', *Revue numismatique*, vol. 6, 31 (1989), pp. 194-222, esp. 202; *idem*, 'A hoard of Charles the Bald (840-77) and Pippin II (845-8): Poitou-Charentes (FR), n.d.', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 175 (2015), pp. 273-84, pl. 37-40, esp. pp. 275-81; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p.144.

[3] *AAng* 846, p. 486. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 28: 'The sources unfortunately offer no indication as to where the Vikings responsible for this attack came from. They probably formed part of the army which had settled in the Saintonge the previous winter, since nothing is reported about the movements of that group in 846.'

[4] Cf. S. M. Lewis, 'Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France', p. 116, and the previous chapter.

[5] For details see *inter alia* Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, pp. 23-25, 59; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 93-95, 131; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 34-35; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 31-32.

[6] *AAng* 847, p. 486. Most of the monks at Déas had already fled to their refuge at Cunault (near Saumur on the Loire) which Count Vivien of Tours had previously given them on 27 December 845, and confirmed the same day by Charles the Bald (cf. Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, p. 61; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 132; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 81, p. 227), possibly before 15 February when Charles gave the community additional lands in the vicinity: 'quod ob infestationem crudelium Normannonim suo in monasterio commorari nequeant', 'because they cannot remain in their monastery on account of the oppression of the cruel Northmen' (see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 91, p. 246; see also S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 28; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 39-40).

[7] *AB* 847: ed. Grat 1964, p. 54.

> Danes came to the western [or southern?] region of Gaul where the Bretons live, defeated them in three battles, and completely overpowered them. Nominoë, beaten, fled with his men; later he softened up the Danes with bribes and got them out of his territories.[1]

It is almost certain that these battles with the Bretons in 846 and 847 and the attacks on the monasteries on Noirmoutier and at Déas in the same years were all part of the same campaign, conducted by the same Northmen who had overwintered in the Saintonge the previous winter.[2] Certainly when we look at the Northmen's activities in these years they complement each other remarkably: when there were raids around the Loire there were none in Aquitaine south of the river, and vice versa. This Coupland and I believe suggests that 'only one Viking fleet was active along the entire Atlantic seaboard'.[3]

The Breton duke Nominoë had paid the 'Danes' to leave his territories, which they did.[4] Nominoë had in fact recently defeated Charles's Franks at the battle at Ballon on 22 November 845 - this battle took place a few miles north of the important Breton monastery of Saint-Sauveur at Redon on the river Vilaine, which divides the Nantais from the Vannetais.[5]

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[1] *AB* 847: trans. Nelson, p. 64.

[2] Cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 120; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.

[4] In the following chapter we shall discuss events in Brittany and even in the region of Bayeux in Neustria in 846 to 847. In connection with this is it a thought too far to bring up not only the 'legates' who the three brothers Louis the German, Lothar I and Charles the Bald decided to send to the Breton *dux* Nominoë from their reconciliatory assembly in late February/March 847 at Meersen (see *MGH*, *Capit*, II, p. 70), but also their joint decision (*ibid*.) to send legates to the Northmen? Here we are told both that: 'Ut similiter ad regum Nordmannorum legati mittantur, qui eum contestentur, quid aut pacem servare studebit aut communiter eos infessos habebit', and that Lothar himself had thus communicated that: 'Sciatis, quia communiter missos ad Nortmannos pro pace accipenda mittimus.' Although Prudentius of Troyes 'omits the meeting of Charles and his brothers at Meersen, late February-early March' (cf. J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 65, n. 5), he does write (*AB* 847: ed. Grat, pp. 54-55; trans. Nelson, p. 65) that: 'Lothar, Louis and Charles sent envoys to Horic [actually *Oric*], king of the Danes, ordering him to restrain his own people from their attacks on Christians: otherwise, they said, he should be in no doubt at all that they would make war on him.' Now the general scholarly opinion (which may be correct) is that this 'Oric' was not Rorik (in Frisia) but the Danish 'king' Horik I (see for instance V. Helton, *Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation*, p. 218 and n. 802). Thus N. Lund, 'Allies of God or man? The Viking expansion in a European perspective', *Viator*, 20 (1989), pp. 45-59, at p. 54, writes: 'The Frankish kings clearly believed or expected their Danish colleague to be in such control of his subjects that he could be held responsible for their misbehaviour abroad, and in 847 sent envoys to Horik threatening to invade Denmark if he did not check the Vikings'. T. Reuter, 'Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 35 (1985), pp. 75-94, at p. 80, also thinks that this embassy of the Frankish kings in 847 was an expression of these kings' general understanding that the 'plundering expeditions' of the Northmen must have been continually under royal control. But which 'attacks on Christians' were being referred to? The most logical event was the attack on Frisia at the beginning of 846 as told of in Prudentius's *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (*AB* 846: ed. Grat, p. 51; trans. Nelson, p. 62): 'Danish pirates went to Frisia, extracted as large a tribute as they wanted and then fought a battle which they won. As a result they gained gained control of nearly the whole province.' However, we cannot with complete certainty exclude the attack of the Northmen in July 846 on Noirmoutier; although perhaps we can exclude, for chronological reasons, that on the monastery of Déas on 29 March 847.

[5] For Ballon see H. Guillotel, 'L'action de Charles le Chauve vis-à-vis de la Bretagne de 843 à 851', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 53 (1975-76), pp. 5-32, at pp. 16-17; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 64-65; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 147; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 62, n. 8; J. Laporte, *ChrFont*, p. 79. n. 25; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le*

Prudentius wrote that 'Karolus Brittaniam Galliae cum paucis minus caute adgressus, deficientibur suis, rebus sinistra fortuna inuersis', 'Charles made a rash attack on Brittany with a small force. His men deserted, and things went badly with luck against him'.[1] The *Chronicle of Fontenelle* tells us under the year 846: 'Franci, Britanniam ingressi, propter difficultatem locorum et loca palustria, X° kal. decembris, commisso eum Brittonibus praelio, Brittones superiores inuenti sunt', 'In the year 846 the Franks invaded Brittany, and when they engaged the Bretons in battle on 22 November, the Bretons emerged victorious, because the terrain was difficult and the ground swampy.'[2]

After an assembly at Épernay (dep. Marne) in June 846 Charles the Bald came to Brittany and in August made a peace treaty with Nominoë.[3] Nominoë even managed to get his former ally Lambert, the count of Nantes, removed further east.[4] Therefore, when Nominoë fought three times with the Danes in 846-47 it was probably around the mouth (north or south) of the Loire,[5] where we know the Northmen actually were in these years, and in areas Nominoë would probably by now have already regarded as his territory after Count Lambert had left. In late 851 at Angers, Charles the Bald no doubt rather grudgingly granted Nominoë's son Erispoë the counties of Rennes and Nantes plus the *pays de Retz*, as well as the lands his father had held.[6]

Having been bought off by Nominoë, the Northmen returned once more to Aquitaine and Bordeaux.[7] Late in 847 Prudentius says that: 'Dani Aquitaniae maritime impetunt et praedantur urbemque Burdegalam diu oppugnant', 'Danes attacked and plundered the coastal regions of Aquitaine. They laid siege to the town of Bordeaux for a long time.'[8] These 'coastal regions of Aquitaine' can only mean the Aunis and the Saintonge, and the many offshore islands; the very coasts the Northmen would have sailed along to reach Bordeaux. The siege of Bordeaux went on into 848 when, probably early in the year, the city fell.[9] In the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*

Chauve, pp. 151-57. For the Vilaine see J.-C. Cassard, 'La basse Vilaine, une marche de guerre au haut Moyen Age', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 110 (2003), pp. 29-47.

[1] *AB* 845: ed. Grat, p. 51; trans. Nelson, p. 62.

[2] *ChrFont s.a.* 846 [=845]: ed. Laporte, p. 79; trans. Coupland. Even the East Frankish *Annals of Fulda* reported Charles's defeat, saying that 'after great loss to his army' Charles had 'barely managed to escape with a few of his men' (*AF* 845: trans. Reuter 24). The *Annals of Xanten* simply say: 'Karolus contra Brittanos, sed non profuit', 'Charles campaigned against the Bretons, but without success' (*AX* 846 [=845]: ed. von Simson, p. 15; trans. Coupland).

[3] *AB* 846: ed. Grat, p. 51; trans. Nelson, p. 63; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 49-50.

[4] See J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 147; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 50.

[5] N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, p. 270, believes these confrontations happened in the Vannetais.

[6] *AB* 851: ed. Grat, p. 63; trans. Nelson, p. 73.

[7] Aquitaine's northern boundary was the Loire; although after 851 the *pays de Retz* became part of 'New Brittany'. See also S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 121.

[8] *AB* 847: ed. Grat, p. 5; trans. Nelson, p. 65.

[9] For the Northmen at Bordeaux see F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands'. J. Laporte (*ChrFont*, p. 80, n. 30) quite rightly says that these Northmen 'sont de la bande du Viking Oscar, dont il a été question en 841, et qui brûlèrent Fontenelle en 852'. M. Garaud, who got quite a lot wrong in his 1937 article 'Les invasions des normands en

Prudentius wrote that 'Dani Burdegalam Aquitaniae, Iudaesis prodentibus, captam depopulatamque incendunt', 'In Aquitaine some Jews betrayed Bordeaux to the Danes: having taken the town they ravaged and burned it'.[1] It will be remembered that the monk of Fontenelle wrote explicitly that it was Oskar who had plundered the fortified town of Bordeaux. Separately he tells us that in 848: 'Nortmanni Burdegalium urbem ceperunt, et ducem eiusdem urbis Guilhelmum noctu', 'The Northmen captured the city of Bordeaux by night as well as its duke, William'.[2] The local *Annals of Angoulême* say simply 'Burdigala civitas a Normannis capitur et ignibus crematur', 'The city of Bordeaux was captured and burned by the Northmen'.[3] This William at Bordeaux was without much doubt the son of Bernard of Septimania and his wife Dhuoda.[4] Bernard had been executed in Aquitaine by Charles in early 844.[5] William had then fought alongside Pippin II in June 844 in the Angoumois and defeated the reinforcements coming to help King Charles at Toulouse. William was more than likely granted the command of Bordeaux (and hence of the March of Gascony) by Pippin II sometime after the treaty made between Charles and Pippin at the monastery at Fleury in June 845. The previous Frankish-appointed count of Bordeaux and 'duke' of the Gascon March, Siguin II, had been killed by the Northmen in 845 as has been discussed earlier.

As might be expected, during the siege of Bordeaux over the winter of 847-48 the besiegers sent out parties to forage or to make quick raids for supplies. Just before reporting the capture of Bordeaux, Prudentius says that Charles [the Bald] attacked a 'contingent of [the] Northmen

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Poitou', is however correct to state (p. 252) that when 'le chef normand Oscar' returned from the Seine in 852 it was he who had 'dévasté Bordeaux en 848'.

[1] *AB* 848: ed. Grat, p. 55; trans. Nelson, pp. 65-66. Bernard Bachrach has suggested that perhaps Charles 'had prevailed upon the Jews towards whom he had already demonstrated his goodwill in 846 to act in concert with the Northmen to seize the opportunity to drive William from the city': B. S. Bachrach, *Eary Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe* (Minneapolis, 1977), pp. 112-16, citation at p. 115. This is certainly feasible (though unprovable) because William was Pippin II's man, and Charles like his father and grandfather was pro-Jewish whilst the clerical faction which included Prudentius and Hincmar (plus of course earlier Agobard and his successor Amulo at Lyons) was vehemently anti-Jewish. Whether this was true or not Jewish mercants were certainly involved in selling slaves in the south, see for instance T. Freudenhammer, 'Frühmittelalterlicher Karawanenhandel zwischen dem Westfrankenreich und Al-Andalus', *Vierteljahresschrift fur Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 105. 3 (2018), pp. 391-406; English translation: 'Rafica: Early Medieval Caravan Trade between the West Frankish Kingdom and Al-Andalus', available online at https://www.academia.edu/42907709/Rafica_Early_Medieval_Caravan_Trade_between_the_West_Frankish_Kingdom_and_Al_Andalus.

[2] *ChrFont* 848: ed. Laporte, p. 81; trans. Coupland.

[3] *AAng* 848, p. 486.

[4] For this opinion see *inter alia* L. Levillain, 'Les Nibelungen historiques et leurs alliances de famille', *Annales du Midi*, 50 (1938), pp. 5-66, at pp. 13-15; J. Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France (IXe-Xe siècle)* (Bruges, 1948), pp. 197-98; R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity, 400-1000* (New York, 1983), p. 257; R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 98-99; C. Higounet, J. Gardelles, and J. Lafaurie (eds.), *Bordeaux pendant le Haut Moyen Âge*, in C. Hignounet (ed.), *Histoire de Bordeaux*, vol. 2 (Bordeaux, 1963), p. 36; B. S. Bachrach, *Eary Medieval Jewish Policy*, p. 115.

[5] See *AB* 844: ed. Grat, p. 45; trans. Nelson, p. 57; and compare J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 139-41 and L. Malbos, 'La capture de Bernard de Septimanie', *Le Moyen Âge*, 76 (1970), pp. 7-13.

who were besieging Bordeaux and manfully defeated them', 'Karolus Nordmannorum Burdegalam oppugnantium partem adgressus, uiriliter superat'.[1] What actually happened is more fully revealed in the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*, which says, here again just before mentioning the capture of Bordeaux: 'ANNO D CCC XLVIII, Carolus rex, cum Francis, Aquitaniam ingressus, super fluuium Dordonia VIIII naues Danorum cepit, interfectis piratis earum, in diebus Quadragesimae', 'In the year 848 King Charles entered Aquitaine with the Franks, and in Lent [i.e. 12 February-25 March] captured nine Danish ships on the river Dordogne, killing the pirates on board'.[2] As Janet Nelson quite rightly observes this 'was probably based on a participant's report'.[3] The mouth of the river Dordogne lies just north of Bordeaux where it and the river Garonne merge to form the wide Gironde. What most likely happened is that Charles discovered nine ships moored on the banks of the Dordogne, perhaps while most of the crew were out foraging or pillaging in the surrounding area; he captured their ships and killed 'the pirates on board', who were probably just the guards.[4]

By now there probably were not many monasteries, churches or towns left on or near the coast of Aquitaine for the Northmen to sack. The next target was thus further inland: the *vicus* of Melle (dep. Deux-Sèvres) where the largest silver mine in the Carolingian Empire was to be found as well as a very important Carolingian mint.[5] In 848 Prudentius says 'Nordmanni Metallum uicum populantes incendio tradunt', 'The Northmen laid waste the township (*vicus*) of Melle and set fire to it'.[6] This probably happened later in the year and 'there is little reason

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[1] *AB* 848: ed. Grat, p. 55; trans. Nelson, p. 65.
[2] *ChrFont* 848: ed. Laporte, p. 81; trans. Coupland.
[3] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 154.
[4] L. Levillain ('Les Nibelungen historiques', p. 14, and n. 3) argued that after this very minor victory Charles then 'rebroussa chemin, abandonnant Bordeaux et son défenseur [William] dans le secret espoir peut-être qu'une victoire des Normands le débarrasserait à tout jamais de Guillaume dont il avait appris la valeur militaire à ses dépens et dont il connaissait l'hostilité très justifiée à son égard'. Which we may paraphrase as meaning that he retraced his own steps, abandoning Bordeaux and its defender [William], perhaps secretly hoping that a victory of the Northmen would rid him once and for all of William, whose military prowess he had experienced to his own cost, and whose very justifiable hostility towards himself Charles recognised. Charles's understanding of William's 'valeur militaire' is a reference to the victory of Pippin II in the Angoumois over the Frankish reinforcements being sent to Charles at Toulouse in June 844, where Pippin had been supported by William amongst others. The reference to William's hostility towards Charles is to Charles's execution of William's father Bernard of Septimania in early 844. Compare this with the idea of Bernard Bachrach noted a little earlier, they tend in the same direction.
[5] As well as a lead mine. For both the lead and silver mines (which were related) see A. Daubrée, 'Aperçu historique sur l'exploitation des mines métalliques dans la Gaule, notice supplémentaire', *Revue Archéologique*, 41 (1881), pp. 327-53; L. Bourgeois, 'Melle: la ville, les pouvoirs et les hommes (VIe-XIe siècles)', in Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, *Du monde franc aux califats omeyyade et abbasside: extraction et produits des mines d'argent de Melle et de Jabali. Begleitband zur Ausstellung "Silberpfade zwischen Orient und Okzident", Veröffentlichungen aus dem Deutschen Bergbau-Museum Bochum*, 199 (2014), and all the other studies in this collection. One wonders if the Northmen had looted some Melle coins already and, after inquiry, had decided it could provide a lucrative target. As S. Coupland, 'The coinages of Pippin I and II of Aquitaine', *Revue numismatique*, vol. 6, 31 (1989), pp. 194-222, at p. 219, says: 'The Vikings were always attracted by silver.'
[6] *AB* 848: ed. Grat, p. 55; trans. Nelson, p. 66.

to doubt that it was carried out by the victorious army from Bordeaux'.[1] This raid would have involved an overland trek for the Northmen, a trek which would either have started from the coast of Aunis near the Île de Ré, or slightly further south from the coast of the Saintonge near the Île d'Oléron. At this time, the coastline of both Aunis and the Saintonge was very different to today. Near the Île de Ré the ancient *Golfe des Pictons* was dotted with many small islands, extended much further inland, and was still quite accessible to shallow-draught Scandinavian ships in the ninth century. The Northmen could have sailed or rowed a long way towards Melle. It is possible that the monastery of *La Réole* (dep. Gironde), situated on the Garonne just upriver from Bordeaux, and the nearby palace of Casseuil (dep. Gironde) were destroyed in the same year, as is often stated. Given the location of *La Réole* and Casseuil this probably happened during or just after the capture of Bordeaux and before the raid on Melle. However, the only evidence for such an attack is a letter written to Pope Clement III in 1046 in which the monks of *La Réole* say that 'the monastery of Saint Peter of La Réole had been destroyed by the Northmen, who coming into their lands, destroyed towns and forts (*civitates et oppida*) by fire and sword'.[2] This attack is undated. In 1728 Dom Maupel placed it in 848,[3] a date which has been followed by others since.[4]

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[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 30.

[2] *Cartulaire du prieuré conventuel de Saint-Pierre de La Réole en Bazadais du IXe au XIIe siècle*, ed. L.-C. Grellet-Balguerie, *Archives historiques du Département de la Gironde*, vol. 5 (Bordeaux, 1863), pp. 99-186, no. 99, at p. 144.

[3] Dom Maupel, 'Sancti Petri de regula prioratus historico-chronologica sinopsis', in C. Grellet-Balguerie and P. Courtault (eds.), *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde*, vol. 36 (Bordeaux, 1901), no .1, p. 5.

[4] See, for example, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 123; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 30. For the reliability or not of this cartulary see C. Higounet (ed.), *De Fleury-sur-Loire à Saint-Pierre de la Réole, mille ans d'histoire monastique (977-1977*), *Actes du Colloque du millénaire de la fondation du Prieuré de La Réole* (Bordeaux, 1980); *idem*, 'A propos de la fondation du prieuré de La Réole', in C. Higounet (ed.), *De Fleury-sur-Loire à Saint-Pierre de la Réole, mille ans d'histoire monastique (977-1977*), *Actes du Colloque du millénaire de la fondation du Prieuré de La Réole* (Bordeaux, 1980), pp. 7-11. In recent personal communication Frédéric Boutoulle says: 'It is not certain that the monastery of La Réole existed in 848, since its Carolingian foundation is questioned. The identification of Casseuil with the royal palace results from a confusion of Aimoin de Fleury in 1004 with Casseuil in Poitou (where there was a royal fisc).' In his 2008 paper 'Par peur des Normands' (p. 29) F. Boutoulle wrote, 'Le plus ancien témoignage écrit et daté sur les incursions scandinaves dans notre région est une lettre des moines de La Réole adressée au pape Clément II, datée de 1046 conservée dans le cartulaire du prieuré', referencing C. Grellet-Balguerie (ed.), 'Le cartulaire du prieuré Saint-Pierre de la Réole', *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde*, vol. 5 (Bordeaux, 1863), no. 99, p. 144. He then continues, 'Cette missive dit que « *le monastère Saint-Pierre de La Réole a éte détruit par les Normands qui, étant entrés dans les terres, dévastaient cités et places fortes (civitas et oppida), par le glaive et par le fue* ». Cependant, cette même lettre attribue la fondation du *monasterium* à Charlemagne, une affirmation dont les travaux de Ch. Higounet puis de S. Faravel ont montré la fausseté'. Here he is referencing Charles Higounet's 'A propos de la fondation du prieuré de La Réole' (as referenced above), and S. Faravel, *Occupation du sol et peuplement de l'Entre-deux-Mers Bazadais de la préhistoire à 1550*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Bordeaux III, 1991), and *eadem*, 'Autour du récit du voyage et de la mort d'Abbon, en 1004, à la Réole par Aimoin : un témoignage précieux sur l'histoire du prieuré, de la ville et de leur context gascon', *Cahiers du Bazadais*, 150 (2005), pp. 5-29. F. Boutoulle (*ibid.*) then goes on to state: 'Il n'est pas même possible d'invoquer la célèbre description de La Réole faite par Aimoin de Fleury en 1004. Le biographe d'Abbon de Fleury décrit bien des bâtiments ruinés à La Réole, dont une tour en moëllons carrés, mais il n'attribue la responsabilité de ces ruines à personne. Il faut donc convenir que la première

Having wintered again in Aquitaine in 848-49, probably on their island base, the same force moved yet further inland in the spring, this time using the river Dordogne and its tributary the Isle, and looted and burned the town of Périgueux (Dordogne) in Pippin's territory before 'returning to their ships unopposed'.[1]

In regard to all these raids in southern Aquitaine between 845 and 849 - Saintes, Bordeaux, Melle, Périgueux and the surrounding areas - all of these places were most likely still under Pippin's control whatever Prudentius said in 845 regarding the treaty of Fleury.[2] Thus the Northmen were, knowingly or not, undermining Pippin's position. Janet Nelson says: 'As for Aquitaine: it seems clear that the Vikings' impact here played a crucial part in the collapse of Pippin II's regime'.[3]

To return to the Mullaghboden coins, when we trace all the movements of the Northmen on the Loire and in Aquitaine in the years up to early 849 there is no support whatever for Dolley's contention that 'Norse Vikings' (the *Westfaldingi*) had left their 'base' on Noirmoutier in 846, after burning it to prevent its use by some rival band of 'Danes', and then returned to Ireland.[4] The raiding fleet in Aquitaine seems to have remained intact, at least from 845, the earliest date for the minting of the Pippin II coins at Melle, until early 849. It is, of course, possible that the odd ship or two, or just a person, had split from Oskar's fleet around this time and gone to Ireland, but there is absolutely no Frankish or Aquitanian evidence to this effect. This conclusion is strongly reinforced by looking at the Irish context.

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des sources régionales sur les effets des incursions scandinaves n'est pas fiable et que cette mémoire n'est pas antérieure au début du XIe siècle.' Thereafter (*ibid.*) Boutoulle says, 'Cela n'empeche pas cette lettre d'établir une tradition : l'acte de fondation de La Réole, attribué au duc Gombaud en 977, mais en réalité forgé en 1081, écrit que Gombaud « *avait découvert dans des livres anciens où toute sagesse se trouve, qu'avant l'invasion des Normands (ante Normannorum irruptionem) et la destruction du monastère, ce lieu consacré dépendant de l'abbaye de Fleury* ». Here Boutoulle references M. Malherbe, *Les institutions municipales de la ville de La Réole, des origines à la révolution française*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Bordeaux I, 1975), p. 719. All these later matters are explored more in Chapter 15.

[1] *AB* 849: ed. Grat, p. 57; trans. Nelson, p. 68.

[2] See *Recueil des actes de Pépin Ier et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (814-848)*, eds. L. Levillain and M. Prou (Paris, 1926), pp. 217-21; *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*: *Die Geschichte der Reimser Kirche*, ed. M. Stratmann, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 36 (Hanover, 1998), p. 268; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 103, p. 274; S. Coupland, 'The coinages of Pippin I and II of Aquitaine', esp. p. 202; *idem*, 'A hoard of Charles the Bald (840-77) and Pippin II (845-8): Poitou-Charentes (FR), n.d.', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 175 (2015), pp. 273-84, esp. pp. 275-81; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 144-45.

[3] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 154.

[4] R. H. M. Dolley, 'The 1871 Viking-Age Find of Silver Coins from Mullaghboden', p. 60.

The Irish context

In the later 840s the Scandinavians in Ireland were under severe pressure and lost several battles against the Irish,[1] including one in 845 where the chieftain Turgés was 'taken prisoner by Mael Sechnaill and afterwards drowned in Loch Uair'.[2]

Then in 848 the Irish annals report a major battle fought near Castledermot in County Kildare, where a significant chieftain called Jarl Tomrair (ON Þórir) was killed by Irish forces. He was called a deputy or heir-apparent of the king of *Laithlinn*. This battle is reported in the *Annals of Ulster* and the *Chronicon Scotorum* in exactly the same words, 'A battle was won by Ólchobar king of Munster and Lorcán son of Cellach, with the Leinstermen, against the heathens at Scé [Sciath] Nechtain, in which fell jarl Þórir (Tomrair), deputy/heir-apparent of the king of *Laithlinn* and 1200 along with him'.[3] The Northmen from *Laithlinn* had suffered a major defeat at the hands of Ólchobor, king of Mumu, and Lorcán son of Cellach - the kings of Munster and Leinster. Donnchadh Ó Corráin says:

> This took place at a strategic place, Castledermot, Co Kildare, not far from Dublin where a Viking settlement had been established in 841-42. The Irish leaders were amongst the most powerful provincial kings in the country, the troops involved were numerous, and the slaughter was immense. Þórir the earl was evidently a very important person, even if the identity of the king whose heir-designate he was remains unclear [...]. He was leading a large army. This was a battle of major significance, even if we take the annalist's estimate of the slain (as we ought) to be merely a conventional expression for a very large number.[4]

The battle was evidently of enough importance for Prudentius to write about it, interestingly enough immediately following his report about the attack on the town and mint at Melle in Poitou:

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[1] 'The regular annals record Viking defeat in seven of eight battles against the forces of various Irish kings between 845 and 848, sometimes with heavy losses': C. Etchingham *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6. Very interestingly under the year 847 Prudentius wrote: 'The Irish, who had been attacked by the Northmen for a number of years, were made into regular tribute-payers. The Northmen also got control of the islands all around Ireland, and stayed there without encountering any resistance from anyone' (*AB* 847: ed. Grat, p. 54; trans. Nelson, p. 65), which has often been taken as when the Northmen first arrived in the Hebrides, although this localisation is not certain.

[2] *AU* 845.8: 'Turges du ergabhail la Mael Sechnaill & badudh Turges i l-Loch Uair iarum.'

[3] *AU* 848.5; *CS* 848; trans. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7. *AU* 848.5: 'Bellum re nÓlcobur rí Muman 7 re Lorggán mac Cellaig co Laighniu for gennti ecc Scíaith Nechtai[n] in quo ceciderunt Tomrair erell tánise rígh Laithlinne 7 dá cét déc imbi.'

[4] D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', p. 300.

> The Irish [*Scotti* = Gaels] attacked the Northmen, won a victory with the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ, and drove them out of their land. Consequently, the king of the Irish [*rex Scottorum* = king of the Gaels] sent envoys bearing gifts to Charles to make a friendship-treaty and alliance with him; the Irish king also sought permission to travel through Charles's kingdom on a pilgrimage to Rome.[1]

Might it be of significance that Mullaghboden, where the coins we are concerned with were buried, lies midway between Dublin and Skegagun/Castledermot? Perhaps a Northman recently arrived (in Dublin?) from Aquitaine had buried his few coins on the way to fight the Irish at Castledermot, never to return, or they might equally have been deposited by a Northman fleeing after the battle. Dolley certainly thought so as was discussed extensively earlier. The difficulty with this whole conception is that there is no evidence at all in the Irish annals that the Scandinavians in Ireland who fought these battles were 'reinforced' in 848 or even somewhat before - unlike in 849, a subject that will be addressed later. This 'reinforcement', or return, is a conjecture on Dolley's part and it is a circular argument. Therefore, as with the supposed Irish origin of the *Westfaldingi* in Aquitaine we should probably discard Allen's and Dolley's conception of Aquitanian Northmen coming to Ireland sometime between 846 and 848; it is a view that finds no support in either Frankish or Irish sources.

The whole Mullaghboden hoard amounts to only a handful of coins. It was probably the property of just one man, enough to fit in his pocket. It is also the only very circumstantial evidence that one or more of the Northmen in Aquitaine might have moved on to Ireland. But does one swallow make a summer? Blackburn suggested the coins could have arrived via trading, perhaps in slaves.[2] This is scholarly caution and if the coins were the product of slave-trading we would need to seek the context for their acquisition. As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, they might not even have belonged to a 'viking'. However, there is an alternative. This is that the Aquitaine Northmen did come to Ireland, but in 849 and not in 846-48. I will discuss this later after first asking who the leader of the *Westfaldingi* in Aquitaine was.

The leader of the *Westfaldingi*

The *Westfaldingi* fleet that sacked Nantes was a force assembled to crack what would have been seen as a hard nut. That one of its main leaders, perhaps even its primary leader, was Oskar is

[1] *AB* 848: ed. Grat, p. 55; trans. Nelson, p. 66.
[2] M. Blackburn, 'Presidential Address 2006: Currency under the Vikings, Part 3', p. 125.

a view held by many historians.[1] But is this another lurking assumption? We can be sure that from the start of the siege of Bordeaux in late 847 Oskar was the leader of the Northmen in Aquitaine until he, and they, reappear on the Seine in late 851. Yet what about before this? And particularly at Nantes in 843? It can never be categorically proved one way or the other that Oskar was or was not the leader of the *Westfaldingi*; it is possible that the *Westfaldingi* were led by another chieftain and that Oskar arrived later - from some unknown place. However, I suggest that Oskar's likely leadership of the *Westfaldingi* can be inferred from the circumstantial evidence and from the context, coupled with the unlikelihood of the alternative.

Firstly, we can follow the movements of the Northmen in Aquitaine very precisely from when they left Nantes in the summer of 843 until their attack on Périgueux in the spring of 849. Except for one part of the fleet splitting off at Toulouse in 844 to go to Spain, there is no conclusive evidence against the hypothesis that the Aquitanian Northmen remained a coherent force throughout. As Coupland says: 'The one Viking fleet active in the west of the kingdom [of the Franks] at this time [the 840s] left the Loire in the summer of 843 and sailed south to Spain, not returning until late October or early November 845.'[2] Coupland added: 'It is striking how closely the raids on the north and south of the region complement each other during this period, suggesting that perhaps only one Viking fleet was active along the entire Atlantic seaboard […].'[3] If this is the case, and it seems to be, why are we then to infer as Coupland does that the *Westfaldingi* active in Aquitaine between 843 and early 847 were a different group to those under Oskar who besieged and captured Bordeaux in late 847 to early 848, and then continued to be active in the region until at least the spring of 849?

Secondly, the *Westfaldingi* at Nantes came at some point from Vestfold in present-day southern Norway, and directly from there and not from Ireland. Additionally, Oskar's fleet came to the Seine in 841 from the North Sea and thus also originally from somewhere in Scandinavia. Coupland experiences some difficulty here. After rightly saying that 'the leader of the Vikings at Bordeaux [in 847-48] was Oskar', he then says 'the band which had sacked Nantes [...] was composed of *Westfaldingi* from Ireland, but the fleet led by Oskar originally

[1] Just for example by J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, p. 29; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 137; J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 145; and others. C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6, says: 'The entire cluster of Atlantic seaboard activity of the 840s is likely to be the work of the same Viking force, that identified by the Aquitanian annals for 843 as Westfaldingi [...] It would appear that Hoseri/Oscheri was the orchestrator of Viking activity on the Atlantic seaboard in the 840s, having first appeared as a raider on the Seine in 841 [...] there must be a presumption [...] that Hoseri/Oscheri was the leader of the Westfaldingi who first attacked Nantes in 843.'

[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 26.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 29.

came from the North Sea ("*ab Oceano euripo*") and thus almost certainly from Denmark'.[1] His resolution of this dilemma is that 'the correct interpretation is probably that there was only one Viking fleet operating along the Atlantic coasts in the 840s, but that its composition changed frequently as new groups arrived from the British Isles or Scandinavia and others departed'.[2] The fleet did split at Toulouse in 844, with one part going to Spain and the other part probably staying in Aquitaine. However, this does not actually resolve the dilemma, which is solely due to the lurking assumption that the *Westfaldingi* came to Aquitaine from Ireland based on Coupland's extrapolation of Vogel's arguments concerning the origin of the earlier Scandinavians in Aquitaine. Except for the split at Toulouse (which Coupland does not mention) there is no evidence that the fleet's composition changed frequently, in fact quite the reverse.[3] Additionally, if there was only 'one fleet' whose 'composition changed frequently as new groups arrived from the British Isles or Scandinavia and others departed'[4] what is being implied is that Oskar's 'Danes' and the 'Norwegian' *Westfaldingi* composed this one fleet. It would be interesting to know how this supposedly happened.

Thirdly, if Oskar was not the Westfaldingi's leader then where had he been between 841 and (say) 847? And why and from where had he suddenly just appeared at the walls of Bordeaux in late 847? I use 847 because we know from the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* that Oskar was responsible for the siege of Bordeaux from late in that year. Vogel's telling of the activities of the Northmen in Aquitaine is found in bits and pieces strewn throughout his magisterial work. It is, however, full of inconsistencies. Vogel spent little effort in identifying or following various named Scandinavian chieftains except when he made rather confident and unsubstantiated claims about the movements of various legendary 'sons of Lothbrok'. Regarding the absence of Oskar's name in the records between 841 and 847, Walther Vogel says, and it seems to me as an afterthought: 'We do not know what had been his [Oskar's] destiny in the meantime [between 841 and 847], although he had plundered many regions', 'Welches seine Schicksale in der Zwischenzeit gewesen waren, wissen wir nicht, doch soll er in vielen Gegenden geplündert haben.'[5]

Simon Coupland follows Vogel very closely and does not hazard an explicit guess for the date of Oskar's arrival in Aquitaine; he just appears as a sort of *Deus ex machina* in Coupland's

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] There certainly were cases in the ninth century and later of fleets amalgamating and splitting, with boats and leaders arriving and leaving, but because this happened elsewhere is not a sufficient reason to assume it happened here in these years, for which there is no evidence at all.
[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 121, my translation.

reconstruction, and apparently from nowhere, with a 'fresh' fleet in 'southern Aquitaine' at the walls of Bordeaux in late 847, supposedly not having been at Nantes, Toulouse, in Spain or even in the Saintonge.[1] If Oskar had come 'almost certainly from Denmark', as Coupland maintains,[2] and by which I presume he means he was a 'Dane', we can search the available sources in vain to find any real trace of his fleet's activities anywhere other than in Aquitaine in the years immediately following his departure from the Seine in 841 and his possible raids along the Channel coasts in 842. This includes Ireland and elsewhere in France. In Neustria and Francia after the chieftain Reginheri's raid on the Seine and Paris in 845, he and many of his men died in Denmark soon thereafter.[3] There were no others raids in this region during these years. There was a raid by '35 ship-loads' of Northmen on Carhampton in northern Somerset in England in 843 which was opposed by King Æthelwulf, but where 'the Danish had possession of the place of slaughter'.[4] Given its location this raid could well have originated in Ireland[5] but other alternatives could be offered. There were raids into Frisia between 845 and 847 possibly in the Frisian-based Dane Rorik's absence[6] which deserve closer study, but after the raid in 846 on Middle Frisia and Dorestad we are told by the local *Annals of Xanten* that 'they returned to their own land, their fleets laden with great booty in the form of both men and goods', 'Illi autem ingenti preda hominum atque facultatum oneratis classibus reversi sunt in patriam',[7] which would seem to exclude Oskar.

Fourthly, during the 840s 'Denmark' was controlled by King Horik I, the last remaining son of the former Danish king Godfrid. If Oskar was from Denmark, we have not the slightest hint that he went back to Denmark during these years, and against this idea the local and well-informed monk of Fontenelle explicitly states that after leaving the Seine in 841 Oskar's fleet had not only taken Bordeaux but during the 840s had also 'occupied many regions and

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[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 29.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] For the attack on Paris in 845 see *inter alia* N. Lund, 'L'an 845 et les relations franco-danoises dans la première moitiè du IXe siècle', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), pp. 25-36; E. Ashman Rowe, *Vikings in the West: The Legend of Ragnar Loðbrók and his sons*, *Studia Medievalia Septentrionalia*, 18 (Vienna, 2012), incl. pp. 118-19; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 151-71; S. Coupland; *Charles the Bald*, pp. 19-26; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 104-15.
[4] *ASC* 840 [=843: ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 64, 65; *AB* 844 [=843]: ed. Grat, p. 48; trans. Nelson, p. 59, and n. 22: 'The Northmen launched a major attack on the island of Britain, in that part which is largely inhabited by Anglo-Saxons. After a battle lasting three days, the Northmen emerged the winners: plundering, looting, slaughtering everywhere, they wielded power over the land at will.'
[5] In 842 there was much activity of the Northmen in Ireland, see *AU* 842. 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, but in 843 nothing at all regarding Northmen is mentioned in Irish annals, although in 844 their activity starts to be reported again: *AU* 844. 1, 4. Maybe some of them at least were attacking in Somerset in 843?
[6] For an overview see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 104-24. Rorik spent some years in the later 840s in exile in Louis the German's realm.
[7] *AX* 846: ed. von Simson, p. 15; trans. Coupland. Cf. *AB* 846: ed. Grat, p. 51; trans. Nelson, p. 62.

plundered them', a thing he could not have done if he had been back home in Scandinavia during these years. These many regions that Oskar's force had occupied and plundered were Nantes, coastal Aquitaine, Toulouse, probably Spain, and in 849-850 possibly elsewhere.

In summary, the evidence, circumstantial though it is, suggests that Oskar was the *Westfaldingi* leader in Aquitaine from 843 until 849, and that it is likely that he, and they, came from somewhere in Scandinavia, probably from Vestfold itself, and not from Ireland nor even, except on the way, from 'the British Isles'.

After 849 and viking gap years

After Oskar's attack on Périgueux in the spring of 849, his fleet would then have rowed back down the Isle to the Dordogne and returned to their ship-base somewhere on the coast of Aunis/Saintonge or on one of the nearby islands.

The question is what did the Northmen do after that? There is no mention in any contemporary or even later source of any Scandinavian activity in Aquitaine, Brittany or in western Neustria (from the Loire to the Seine) from the spring of 849 and throughout the whole of 850 and 851, that is until Oskar's fleet arrived on the Seine on 13 October 851.[1] Regarding the south, Ferdinand Lot in my view correctly put it, 'the Northmen after having abandoned the Loire and Aquitaine at the end of 849 had reappeared in 852'.[2] The evidence

[1] In May 850 the monks of Cormery (dep. Indre-et-Loire), just south of Tours on the Loire, were given permission to found a *cella* as a refuge at Villeloin (a little further away) (see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 131, pp. 343-48). But the monks would have had to ask for permission some time before May and consequently before that year's normal raiding season, and thus this probably relates to general insecurity following earlier raids. Tours itself was not attacked for the first time until November 853, and just before this attack having had notice of the Northmen's arrival the body of Saint Martin was removed to Cormery implying it was still safe at this time (see *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 68; trans. Nelson, p. 77). There is also an undated account in the late fourteenth-century Miracles of Saint Martial/*Miracula sancti Martialis*: *Ex miracula sancti Martialis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 280-83, book 3, chap. 6, p. 282, of a supposed raid on Limoges. Holder-Egger (*ibid.*) places this in 853, followed by Jean Chapelot who says 852-53 (cf. 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg', p. 182). S. Coupland would like to place it in 850 (cf. *Charles the Bald*, p. 33), which seems rather arbitrary. Limoges seems to have remained untouched in these years; see for instance M. Aubrun, *L'ancien diocèse de Limoges des origines au milieu du XIe siècle* (Clermont-Ferrand, 1981), p. 131. Indeed, Charles the Bald actually arrived with an army at Limoges in the summer of 849 where he was welcomed by the Aquitanian magnates (see *ChrFont* 849: ed. Laporte, p. 82; *AB* 849: ed. Grat, pp. 57-58; trans. Nelson, p. 68; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 256-57). One wonders if Charles's presence in force in the area prompted the Northmen to leave. If there was an attack on Limoges in the early 850s it would have had to have been after the end of December 851, for which see F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine de 862 à 866. Robert le Fort', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 76 (1915), pp. 473-510, at p. 486 n. 1; reprinted in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2 (Geneva and Paris, 1970), pp. 781-818; and Chapter 4. A raid on Limoges should more reasonably be placed in 863-864: see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 200 and 203; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 486-88 and nn. 1 and 2; Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 33, p. 73; Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, pp. 63-64.

[2] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire. Les Normands en Bretagne, en Aquitaine, en Gascogne (853-857)', in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2 (Geneva and Paris, 1970), pp. 691-704, at p. 691). Lot is referring to their arrival back in Aquitaine in the autumn of 852. Regarding the Northmen leaving the South at the end of

from France in this period suggests that Scandinavian raiders did not take gap years, and I would suggest these Northmen are unlikely to have spent two years sunning themselves on the beaches of their Aquitanian island base, or have spent the time trying to establish some sort of tributary relationship in the area.[1] Sometimes the absence of evidence does not mean the evidence of absence,[2] but I think here it probably does. If so, where had they gone?

One possible scenario which I hope to explore more in the future, and which I have hitherto tentatively preferred, is that after they left Aquitaine in the spring/summer of 849 they may then have been involved in the complicated raids in Frisia and Flanders in 850 and into the early part of 851, before arriving on the Seine in October of the latter year.[3]

However it could alternatively be conjectured that the Aquitanian Northmen had come to Ireland but in 849 and not in 846-48.[4] The reliable *Annals of Ulster* report that in that year: 'A marine expedition of 140 ships of adherents of the king of the Foreigners came to exercise power over the Foreigners who were there before them, and they afterwards disrupted all Ireland.'[5] Ó Corráin says: 'Evidently, this was a violent attempt by a king of the Vikings, using large forces, to compel the independent Vikings in Ireland to submit to royal authority, and it was fiercely resisted.'[6] Although this annal does not say anything about the identity or origin of the 'king of the Foreigners' whose adherents arrived in 849 it is generally assumed they were from *Laithlinn*, as was Tomrair/Þórir (in 848) and Amlaíb (ON Áleifr/Óláfr) when he arrived in Ireland in 853.[7] This equation is, however, not at all certain. Ó Corráin still maintains that *Laithlinn* was situated in the Scottish Northern and Western Isles although there is no real evidence for this.[8] Yet he does say that 'Vikings raiders from the Northern and Western Isles' did raid 'Noirmoutier and other monasteries on the Atlantic coast of

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849, Lot (*ibid*., p. 691, n. 2) refers to Chapter 3 'La Loire et l'Aquitaine de 843-849' of his planned study of the Northmen's incursions in France, this chapter as far as I can see was regrettably never written although some chapters have subsequently been published at different times.

[1] The only conceivable reason I can see why this fleet might have stayed in Aquitaine for two years without making any further raids would be to effect necessary repairs to their ships.

[2] I owe this observation to C. Etchingham.

[3] They may have left in early 850 if they had overwintered on their Aquitanian island base, but we might doubt this because the raid on Périgueux in 849 was early in the raiding season and if they had stayed in the area later in the year the Frankish annals would very probably have said something about their activities.

[4] Chronologically the two possibilities are not really mutually exclusive.

[5] *AU* 849.6: 'Muirfecht .uii.xx. long di muinntir rígh Gall du thíachtain du tabairt greamma forsna Gaillu ro bádur ara ciunn co commascsat hÉrinn n-uile íarum'; trans. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7.

[6] D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', p. 301.

[7] *AU* 848.5; *AU* 853, 2. For the 'Foreigners' of 849 probably being 'Laithlinn' Northmen, see D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', pp. 300-2; C. Etchingham *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 13-14.

[8] See D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century'. For a recent excellent and thorough critique of Ó Corráin's Scottish idea see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7, but also see his two earlier works referenced in a following note.

Francia'.[1] But he is referring here to the raids in the early 800s not to the 840s, and he explicitly derives this opinion from Vogel. Etchingham has argued extensively and convincingly that the '*Laithlinn*' Northmen in Ireland were from a 'polity' in southern Norway, either in the Trondelag, or in an independent southwest Norwegian polity centred on Avaldsnes in Rogaland, or in a polity of 'greater Westarfolda' which extended to include parts of western Norway.[2] Although Etchingham has not analysed the Aquitanian Northmen in detail he does make the conjecture that 'perhaps the description of Oskar in the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* as *Nortmannorum dux* "chief (= jarl?) of the Northmen" means that he [...] was an agent of the polity designated *Laithlinn* which [...] was most likely in Norway'.[3] If the *Westfaldingi* had come from Vestfold, and if *Laithlinn* was a southern Norwegian polity, perhaps even greater Vestfold as Etchingham argues, then could it be possible that the reinforcements who arrived in Ireland in 849 were in fact the Aquitanian *Westfaldingi*? The Irish annalistic evidence might hint that these reinforcements did not stay long and, in fact, new reinforcements under Amlaíb 'son of the king of Laithlinn' had to come in 853 after the resident Scandinavians had suffered at the hands of newly arrived 'Danish' black foreigners in 851-52. When referring to the well-known contemporary Irish poem found as a marginal entry in a Saint-Gall manuscript of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*, which Pádraig Ó Néill[4] and others[5] date to 851, Etchingham says that 'it implies that the poet feared either the return of the Vikings who had gone home after campaigning in Ireland in 849-850, or the arrival of new Vikings from *Laithlinn*'.[6] This would certainly chronologically fit with the probable absence of Oskar's fleet from Aquitaine from the spring of 849 until its arrival on the Seine in late 851, and as Oskar's Northmen were probably *Westfaldingi* originally from Vestfold it might provide a link with Ireland if Etchingham's theory regarding where *Laithlinn* was located is correct. If true, it would support the argument that the Mullaghboden coins were deposited by one of these Northmen. Yet I do not favour this alternative. One reason telling against it is that the 849 'reinforcement' fleet coming to Ireland supposedly totalled 140 ships whilst the fleet of the *Westfaldingi* at Nantes in 843 amounted to 'only'

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[1] D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', p. 303, n. 27.
[2] C. Etchingham, 'The location of historical Laithlinn/Lochla(i)nn: Scotland or Scandinavia', pp. 11-31; *idem*, 'Names for the Vikings in Irish Annals', pp. 23-38; *idem*, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7.
[3] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6.
[4] P. Ó Néil, 'Irish observance of the three lents and the date of the St Gall Priscian (Ms. 904)', *Ériu*, 51 (2000), pp. 159-80, at pp. 177-79.
[5] See D. N. Dumville, *Three Men in a Boat: Scribe, Language and Culture in the Church of Viking-Age Europe* (Cambridge, 1997); D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', pp. 301-2.
[6] Although Etchingham (pers. comm.) adds: 'The only reason I have (very tentatively) inferred some withdrawal thereafter is that Máel Sechnaill could drown the Vikings' erstwhile ally with apparent impunity in 851.'

sixty-seven ships, and it had certainly suffered losses in the meantime. In addition, as Etchingham tellingly points out: 'The forces that arrived in 849 must surely be those that devastated the Midlands heartland of Irish over-king Máel Sechnaill in 850, in alliance with local rebel Cináed [...]. But Laithlinn forces in Ireland remained sufficiently strong to be able - despite defeat by "Black Heathens" at Dublin in 851 - to put out a fleet of 160 ships against the newcomers at Carlingford Lough in 852.'[1]

Whatever the case Oskar's fleet did leave the Seine in early June 852 to return to southern Aquitaine, and thereafter we can trace its activities in Aquitaine, on the Loire and in southern Brittany with some precision in each and every year until 857. It is also likely that it was these Northmen, whether or not they were now still under Oskar's leadership, who conducted the second Scandinavian expedition to Iberia in 858/59 to 861, but that is another story.

Summary

The Scandinavian raiders operating in Aquitaine in the 840s certainly originally came from the Vestfold in present-day southern Norway. Their primary leader was most likely a chieftain called Oskar. Coming through the strait of Dover they briefly raided up the Seine in 841 and possibly in southern England thereafter, before they sailed around Brittany to reach and sack Nantes in 843. They remained in Aquitaine until 849, continually attacking, besieging and sacking towns and monasteries. One part even went to Spain. Then they left. The same fleet reappeared on the Seine in late 851 before returning once more to Aquitaine in autumn 852 where they were to continue their depredations for most of the 850s. In spite of the few Carolingian coins minted at Melle found at Mullaghboden in Ireland, these 'Aquitanian' Northmen did not come from Ireland, nor did they return there. There is no evidence at all for any Scandinavian 'reinforcements' arriving in Ireland between 845 and 848, and the movements of these raiders on the Loire and in Aquitaine (and in Spain) during these years tells against any idea that the *Westfaldingi* had moved on to Ireland in 848 or slightly before as Allen, Dolley, Coupland and others have suggested they did. After late 851 we can also trace the movements of Oskar's fleet until 857, after which they leave Aquitaine for Spain (quite likely now under new leadership), only returning from Spain in late 861 or early 862.

If the scenario that it was a fleet of Aquitanian-based Northmen which returned (perhaps briefly) to Ireland in 849-50 were correct (and I have argued it is not) then this could certainly

[1] Personal correspondence.

have been the occasion when the Mullaghboden coins were deposited. If, on the other hand, the *Westfaldingi* had been in Frisia and Flanders from late 849/early 850 until late 851 then one would once again have to conclude that the deposit of the Mullaghboden coins was not the result of the Aquitanian *Westfaldingi* fleet coming to Ireland, and thus these few coins were in fact one example of one swallow not making a summer.[1] Finally, even if these Northmen had actually remained in Aquitaine from the spring of 849 until leaving for the Seine sometime in 851 then even more emphatically these few Carolingian coins cannot provide any support for the hypothesis that they arrived in Ireland with a Scandinavian fleet from Aquitaine.

Yet the fact remains that the Mullaghboden deniers of Pippin II were minted at Melle between 845 and 848, and they must have originally been acquired during the raids in Aquitaine in the late 840s or early 850s. If the coins did not arrive with a fleet in 849, they must have found their way there through some type of trading or exchange (whether in slaves or not), or they were brought by a single man, or in a single Scandinavian ship, splitting off from the main fleet to go to Ireland. If we were to look for a good opportunity for either of these things to have happened it might possibly be in the period running from late 849 to late 851, years when it is also possible that Oskar's fleet was in northern Francia, or even when his fleet was quite definitely on the Seine in 851-52.

[1] Another Carolingian coin hoard was found in 1872 at Kättilstorp in Västergötland in present-day Sweden - just across the Oslo fjord from Vestfold. The hoard contained three deniers of Charles the Bald minted at Melle and three deniers of Pippin II, two minted at Melle and one at Poitiers. They were undoubtedly originally booty or tribute from raids in Aquitaine in the 840s or early 850s. See H. Mäkeler and P. Berghaus, 'Carl Säve, der Fund von Kättilstorp und die karolingischen Münzen im Münzkabinett der Universität Uppsala', in H. Nilsson (ed.), *Opus mixtum*, *Studia Numismatica Upsaliensia*, 4 (Uppsala, 2009), pp. 157-200, at pp. 168-73; S. Coupland, 'The Coinages of Pippin I and II of Aquitaine', *Revue numismatique*, 6th series, 31 (1989), pp. 194-222, at pp. 219-20; *idem*, 'Raiders, Traders, Worshippers and Settlers: The Continental Perspective', in J. Graham-Campbell, S. M. Sindbæk, and G. Williams (eds.), *Silver Economies, Monetisation and Society in Scandinavia, AD 800–1100* (Aarhus, 2011), pp. 113-31, at pp. 113-14, 123-26; *idem*, 'A Hoard of Charles the Bald (840-77) and Pippin II (845–8): Poitou-Charentes (FR), n.d.', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 175 (2015), pp. 273-84, at pp. 279-80; I. Garipzanov, 'Carolingian Coins in Early Viking Age Scandinavia (ca. 754-ca. 900): Chronological Distribution and Regional Patterns', *Nordisk Numismatisk Årsskrift 2003-2005* (2008), pp. 65-92, at p. 84. They were probably brought in a parcel to Scandinavia where they were combined with some Arabic coins, most likely sometime in the early 850s. Even though the *Westfaldingi* came from Vestfold at some point, and Kättilstorp lies just across the Oslo fjord from Vestfold, the known movements of the Aquitanian fleet do seem to exclude the possibility that it, *as a whole*, returned to Scandinavia in the early 850s.

Chapter 4

RETURN TO AQUITAINE AND THE LOIRE, 852-*c*.857

This chapter attempts to establish a chronology of the events in the years 852-*c*.857 involving the Northmen in Aquitaine and on the Loire, and to identify in a precise manner the different protagonists involved in the region and their movements and connections. The 'facts' of the Scandinavians' activities on the Loire, in Aquitaine and even in south-eastern Brittany during the 850s are analysed, reconstructed and interpreted as best I am able given the sources we have. Furthermore, an interpretation regarding both the chronology of these events and who from the Scandinavian side was involved will be proposed. Such an in-depth analysis has rarely, if indeed ever, been undertaken and what follows is based solely on the sources available to us. Finally, it will be suggested that it was these Northmen who undertook the second Scandinavian expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean in the period 858 to 861. In Appendix 1 some earlier alternative views and reconstructions of other historians, both regarding dates and which Scandinavian chieftains were involved, will be highlighted and assessed.

Back in Aquitaine

After having grabbed whatever booty it could from its raid up the Seine, Oskar's fleet left the area on or before 5 June 852 - 'on laden ships', bound for 'Bordeaux' - hence for Aquitaine. It was soon back in Poitou in the same general area it had been pillaging in the 840s. It first made landfall in the *Golf des Pictons* in what is now the Marais Poitevin, perhaps after first having returned to the island it had previously used as a raiding base in the 840s. We find the fleet's first action recorded by the local and reliable *Annals of Angoulême*: '852. Ramnulfus et Raino pridie nonas novembris ad Briliaco villa cum Normannis dimicant', and in the later Limousin version called the *Chronicle of Aquitaine*: '852. Ramnulfus quoque Pictavenis ac Raino, propinquus ejus, pridie nonas novembris ad Briliaco villa cum Normannis dimicant.'[1] So on 4 November 852 the Northmen had fought with Ramnulf (the count of Poitou), and a probable relative called *Raino* at the *villa* of Brillac. Brillac is situated on the river Vendée in southern Poitou (dep. Vendée, arr. Fontenay-le-Comte, cant. Chaix).[2]

[1] *AAng* 852, p. 485; *ChrAquit* 852, p. 253.

[2] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 691, n. 4; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 285; A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou 778-1204* (Paris, 1904), vol. 1, p. 21, no. 3; J. Chavanon, in *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 135, n. 5. The other option for the location of the *villa* of

The Vendée is a small tributary of the Sèvre Niortaise which flows into the present-day bay of Aiguillon just opposite the Île de Ré.[1] But in the ninth century the whole area was still riddled with many islets which were mostly reachable only by boat.[2] Cécile Treffort points out that: 'Une grande partie des marais maritimes aujourd'hui asséchés étaient au Moyen Âge des espaces d'eau. C'est le cas en particulier du marais poitevin, vers l'anse de l'Aiguillon.'[3] What might have happened as Marcel Garaud (who followed Alfred Richard) suggested is that the local 'Aquitanian' forces of Count Ramnulf and Raino had been unable to prevent the Northmen's disembarkation but had followed them before giving battle at Brillac.[4] But it is also quite possible that the fleet had managed to row to, or very near to, Brillac itself. Given that the Northmen had left the Seine in early June 852 they would most likely have arrived back in the area sometime in the summer, but certainly well before November. Perhaps they had used the intervening few months to rebuild the island base they had used previously? Ramnulf had been count of Poitou since 839.[5] With regard to *Raino*, Ademar of Chabannes added to the reports of the *Annals of Angoulême* and the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* which provided the core of many of his stories. He wrote that Raino was the count of Herbauge but added that the Franks had fled from Brillac: 'Rannulfus quoque, comes Pictavensis, et Raino, comes Arbatilicensis, consanguineus ejus, cum Normannis in Briliaco villa dimicantes, fugati sunt.'[6] It has sometimes been suggested[7] that Ademar was confused in making this *Raino* a count of Herbauge because Rainald of Herbauge had been killed at Blain (dep. Loire-Atlantique) in May 843 fighting the

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Brillac is the *portus* at Breuillac on the River Sèvre (cf. A. Richard, *ibid.*). I will discuss the identity of Ramnulf and Raino later.

[1] The river Sèvre Niortaise forms the northern border of Aunis. It is today navigable for 30kms as far as Niort. The river has its source at Sepvret (dep. Deux-Sèvres), just north of Melle. The Charente forms the southern border of Aunis, and the Île d'Oléron lies at its mouth.

[2] Cf. C. Treffort, 'Iles et moines du littoral atlantique entre Loire et Gironde au Moyen Âge', pp. 319-34. See also, *eadem*, 'Moines, monastères et prieurés charentais au Moyen Âge. Quelques réflexions autour d'un projet collectif en cours', in D. Pichot and F. Mazel (eds.), *Prieurés et société au Moyen Âge*, *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 113.3 (2006), pp. 167-88; P. Boissonnade, 'Les îles du Bas-Poitou pendant les cinq premiers siècles du haut Moyen Age (*V*e-*IX*e *siècle*), *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4 (1916-1918), pp. 365-403.

[3] C. Treffort, 'Iles et moines du littoral atlantique', p. 321.

[4] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 252; A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, p. 21.

[5] At least according to Ademar of Chabannes (cf. *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 135; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 217). But we should take note of John Gillingham's warnings regarding using Ademar as a reliable source for the ninth century: 'Ademar of Chabannes and the history of Aquitaine in the reign of Charles the Bald', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald*, pp. 41-51.

[6] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 135; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 217.

[7] See, for example, S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 37 and n. 48; J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes and the history of Aquitaine in the reign of Charles the Bald', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald. Court and Kingdom* (Aldershot, 1990), pp. 41-51, at p. 45, n. 33.

Bretons and Count Lambert[1] - just a month before the Scandinavian sack of Nantes in late June. However, having discussed the changing fortunes of the county of Herbauge in the preceding years Hubert Guillotel came to the conclusion that *Raino* being a count of Herbauge 'est plus que probable', although he was probably not count of the whole historic county because part of it, the *pays de Retz*, had been granted (doubtless grudgingly) to Erispoë by Charles the Bald at Angers in September or October 851.[2] That Raino was indeed the count of (a perhaps reduced) county of Herbauge is made in my opinion almost certain by the fact that on 27 December 845 when Vivian count of Tours[3] granted the monastery of Cunault (dep. Maine-et-Loire) to the monks of Saint-Philibert and their abbot Hilbod to serve as a refuge from 'the invasions of the barbarians, that is from the frequent and unexpected attacks of the Northmen and the Bretons', 'quia barbica infectatione, Nortmannorum scilicet et Brittannorum crebris atque improvisis incursionibus propiis pelluntur sedibus', the act was signed first by counts Vivian and Lambert (Rainald of Herbauge having died two years previously) immediately followed by the signatures of *Raino*, *Ragenaldus* and *Ragenaldus abba* (the abbot of the monastery of Marmoutier at Tours).[4] Jean-Pierre Brunterc'h identifies *Raino* and *Ragenaldus* as two cadet sons of count Rainald of Herbauge, and *Raino* with the Raino who fought the Northmen at Brillac in late 852.[5] Whether the Franks fled or not, Brillac seems to have been a rather indecisive engagement because Ramnulf certainly lived on to fight another day. He in fact died in September 866 of the wounds

[1] See the previous chapter. As noted there the 'battle' was probably not at Messac (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine), as is often stated. According to the *Chronicle of Nantes* (*La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 4, pp. 8-11), Nominoë and Lambert had started to march south towards Nantes. Count Rainald, possibly on Charles the Bald's orders, then moved north to meet them. Near the town of Messac on the river Vilaine, which divides the Nantais and the Vannetais, Rainald came across half the Breton force under Nominoë's son Erispoë, which had just crossed the river. He attacked, and the Bretons fled. Rainald then moved to the nearby little river Isac (a tributary of the Vilaine), near to the village of Blain (dep. Loire-Atlantique), where his warriors rested. Lambert had not been at the Messac fight because he was waiting to meet some other Bretons. But he joined forces with Erispoë and they soon found and massacred Rainald and most of his nobles at Blain. Rainald's army, it seems, had been resting unarmed by the river.

[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 285. *AB* 851: ed. Grat, pp. 63-64; trans. Nelson, p. 73; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 166. That Raino was the 'new' count of Herbauge is a view also held by A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, p. 21, and M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 252. F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 691, n. 3, thought that Raino was just a hypocoristic form of Ramnulfus and that he was a 'cousin' of Ramnulf I of Poitiers. For the evolution of the county of Herbauge see J.-P. Brunterc'h, *L'extension du ressort politique et religieux du Nantais au sud de la Loire : essai sur les origines de la dislocation du 'pagus' d'Herbauge (IXe siècle-987)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Paris-Sorbonne, 1981).

[3] Vivian was count of Tours and Charles the Bald's chamberlain and was killed at the battle of Jengland-Beslé in 851.

[4] See *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 81, pp. 227-29; P. Juénin, *Nouvelle histoire de l'abbaïe royale et collegiale de saint Filibert et de la ville de Tournus : avec les preuves* (Dijon, 1733), pp. 82-83. Vivian had only recently been granted Cunault by Charles the Bald on 19 October 845: *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 77, pp. 217-19. For the political context of all this see F. Gross, *Abbés, religieux et monastères dans le royaume de Charles le Chauve*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Paris IV Sorbonne, 2006), pp. 300-2.

[5] J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine et la Marche de Bretagne', p. 70.

he had received three days before when he and the 'Neustrian' magnate Robert the Strong had fought the same Northmen at the battle of Brissarthe (dep. Maine-et-Loire).[1] Whatever the case, as Marcel Garaud rightly put it: 'Il est certain que les Francs ne réussirent pas à anéantir cette troupe de païens,'[2] as was to be proved by subsequent events.

After doubtless returning to their ship-base for the winter, in the spring of the next year these same Northmen were still in exactly the same area. According to the *Annals of Angoulême* in May of 853 they attacked and burned the monastery at Luçon (dep. Vendée, arr. Fontenay-le-Comte): '853. Lucionnus mense maio a Normannis succenditur.'[3] It is highly probable that on their way to Luçon the Northmen also attacked and burned the small island monastery of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm which they would have passed on their way to Luçon.[4] Such an attack is reported in the *Chronicon Sancti Maxentii* under the year 877.[5] But this mid-twelfth-century compilation places many Scandinavian attacks under this same year that we know happened in other years (including those on Luçon and Tours, which both happened in 853), and thus Marcel Garaud and others very plausibly suggest that given the geographic proximity the destruction of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm happened in 853.[6]

Having sacked and burned the monasteries of Luçon and (probably) Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm in May these Northmen then decided to head to the Loire. As Lot says, 'they advanced from the South to the North, from the Sèvre Niortaise [in Lower Poitou], or perhaps from the Charente, in the direction of the Loire'.[7] Immediately after mentioning the burning of Luçon, the *Annals of Angoulême* say that in June the monastery of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil (situated at

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[1] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 130-31; trans. Nelson, p. 135; *AF s.a.* 867 [=866]: ed. Kurze, p. 66; trans. Reuter, p. 57; *AAng* 866, p. 486; Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 66; trans. MacLean, p. 153-54. We will examine Brissarthe more in later chapters.

[2] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 252. Garaud (*ibid.*) has 'Oscar's' fleet coming from the Seine in 852 to 'la Gironde', and then *a part* of this fleet coming to 'Bas-Poitou'. There is no evidence for such a split and that the fleet first went to Bordeaux ('la Gironde') is highly unlikely. If they had first gone to Bordeaux in 852 (which the same force had besieged and then taken in 847-48) we would probably have heard of it. When these same Northmen did actually return to Bordeaux in 855 it was reported by Prudentius of Troyes in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (see *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80).

[3] *AAng* 853, p. 486; *ChrAquit* 853, p. 253: '853. Lucionnus mense maio a Normannis exuritur.'

[4] Both of these small monasteries had been founded in the late seventh century under the episcopate and with the aid of Bishop Ansoald of Poitiers: see C. Treffort, 'Iles et moines du littoral atlantique', p. 324.

[5] *La chronique de Saint-Maixent 751-1140,* ed. J. Verdon (Paris, 1979), pp. 68-69; *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, p. 374.

[6] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des Normands en Poitou', pp. 252-53; C. Treffort, 'Iles et moines du littoral atlantique', pp. 325-26; F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 692, n. 6; E. Barbier, 'Maillezais, du palais ducal au réduit bastionné', in C. Treffort and M. Tranchant (eds.), *L'abbaye de Maillezais: Des moines du marais aux soldats huguenots* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 203-28, at p. 204 and n. 9.

[7] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 691, my translation. Lot's 'perhaps from the Charente' cannot be supported because there is not the slightest evidence that there were any Scandinavians operating or based on the Charente in 852-53, although there certainly were later. More will be said about Lot's reconstruction shortly and in Appendix 1.

Mont-Glonne on the Loire, 50 km upriver from Nantes) and the *civitas* of Nantes were similarly attacked and burned,[1] followed in early November by the renowned city of Tours and its church of Saint-Martin.[2]

It cannot be definitely proved that the same Northmen were involved but it is extremely likely.[3] Not only was there no other Scandinavian fleet to which we might attribute the attacks on the Loire in June of this year, but, furthermore, when a fleet led by a chieftain called Sidroc arrived from the Seine, probably in the autumn of 853 as will be discussed later, it found an earlier group of Northmen already occupying the island of *Betia* situated in the Loire at Nantes; these can only have been Oskar's.[4] Prudentius gives the following report under the year 853: 'On 8 November, Danish pirates from Nantes[5] heading further inland brazenly attacked the town of Tours and burned it along with the church of St Martin, and other neighbouring places.'[6] He adds that 'because the attack had been known about beforehand with complete certainty, the body of St Martin had already been taken away to the small monastery of Cormery and the treasures of his church to the *civitas* of Orléans'.[7] One of the 'other neighbouring places'

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[1] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 692, says that after attacking and looting Luçon in May the Northmen had moved, seemingly overland, to the Loire, which they joined at Saint-Florent, where they burned the monastery, before 'following the course of the river, they descended the Loire and entered Nantes without encountering any resistance'. This is possible but after Luçon they might more logically have returned to their nearby ships first and then sailed along the Atlantic coast to the Loire, attacking Nantes first and then the monastery of Saint-Florent before returning to establish a (temporary) base on the island of *Betia*. Prudentius actually says that the 'Danish pirates from Nantes (*a Namnetibus*) heading further inland brazenly attacked the town of Tours and burned it' (*AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 68; trans. Nelson, p. 77).

[2] *AAng*, p. 486: '853. Lucionnus mense Maio a Normannis succenditur. Et mense Iunio sancti Florentii monasterium et Nametis civitas, Turonis quoque, similiter exuruntur.'

[3] For the same opinion see, for example, F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', pp. 691-92; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 39-40.

[4] For no apparent reason M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 253, says that: 'Presque simultanément [to the attacks in Lower Poitou] les Normands de la Loire commençaient leurs expéditions dans le Haut-Poitou', in which connection he mentions the pillage of 'Saint-Florent de Mont-Glonne'. Perhaps this idea goes back to Walther Vogel (*Die Normannen*, p. 133), whose rather often contradictory reconstruction of the *Normannen* in Aquitaine (as opposed to in the West Frankish kingdom in general) will be discussed later. But more likely, given that Garaud seems to display no knowledge of Vogel's magisterial work, perhaps to de Courson or to Lot, or maybe it is just an original thought? Whatever the case, Garaud's unfounded view that the Northmen on the Loire in June 853 were distinct from another group of Northmen (Oskar's?) operating further south on the Charente and the Garonne in the years 852-855 has led to, or is echoed in, many later very debatable 'histories', perhaps best exemplified in the works of Jean Renaud; see for example J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, pp. 38-39; *idem*, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings*.

[5] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 694, n. 17, suggested that Prudentius's 'from Nantes' (*a Namnetibus*) should be interpreted as from the 'pays de Nantes, de la Basse-Loire' and not from Nantes itself. This argument cannot be sustained.

[6] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 68; trans. Nelson, p. 77.

[7] *AB* 853: ed. Grat p. 68; trans. Nelson, p.77. For the peregrinations of Saint Martin's relics, see É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de saint Martin [second article]'; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes dans l'histoire et dans la légende'. Even though the monks had fled and removed their relics and treasure, it seems that many of the abbey's records perished in the burning of the town, as the abbot revealed the following year when he asked Charles the Bald to issue a *pancarta* to replace the lost charters, see *RAC,* ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 167, pp. 438-42.

attacked might have been the Tours monastery of Marmoutier although this is only explicitly mentioned in a local martyrology which says that 126 monks were killed on 8 November.[1] Lot says that as well as Tours the Northmen attacked a 'multitude de celles et abbatiales qui l'entouraient', which might or might not be true,[2] and that 'il en était peut-être de même de Marmoutier sur la rive droite de la Loire'.[3]

The burning of Tours by the Northmen in late 853 was such a momentous event that it sent shock waves throughout the Frankish world, and it was reported not only by Prudentius in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and in the *Annals of Angoulême* but also by the East Frankish *Annals of Fulda*: 'The Northmen came up the Loire to plunder the city of Tours in Gaul and set fire to the church of St Martin the Confessor among other buildings, meeting no resistance',[4] and in the *Annals of Xanten*: 'Besides the many other misfortunes which the Northmen inflicted on Christian folk everywhere, they also set light to the church containing the tomb of St Martin, Bishop of Tours.'[5] The contemporary Fleury monk Adrevald, writing in the late 860s to early 870s, said: 'sequenti tempore navigio Turonum veniunt, eamque de more stragibus opplents, ad postremum ignibus tradunt, populate omni circumquaque regione'.[6] The contemporary bishop of Sens Audradus Modicus (fl. 847-53)[7] who had earlier been a monk at Saint-Martin of Tours wrote in his *Liber revelationum*, probably very shortly after the attack:

> Eodemque anno [853] Nortmanni per Ligerim alveum ascendentes, monasterium sancti Martini et basilicam ejus toto orbe venerabilem, nullo obstante mense nono [November] incendunt. Corpus autem beati Martini clerici ejus inde fugientes portaverunt in monasterium monachorum quod dicitur Cormaricus eidem sancto subjectum. Tunc pactum quem pepigerat Christus cum regibus irritum factum est quia non ad

[1] See É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 174 and n. 2; F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 694 and n. 19; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 140.
[2] É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 173, suggests: 'Campés pendant trois mois sous les murs de la ville [Tours], les Normands dévastèrent les campagnes à plusieurs lieues à la ronde', and he gives a whole list of places and churches which were supposedly attacked at this time in the valley of the Choisille. There is no justification for this list as W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 142, n. 2, and F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 696, n. 31, both rightly pointed out. It was probably at the time of the attack on Tours in 903 that these many other churches were attacked, for which see Chapter 11. Although W. Vogel (*ibid.*) does add: 'Daß das Tal [of the Choisille] auch schon 853 heimgesucht wurde, ist natürlich immerhin wahrscheinlich.'
[3] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 694 and n. 19. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 142 and n. 1.
[4] *AF* 853: ed. Kurze, p. 43; trans. Reuter, pp. 34-35.
[5] *AX* 853: ed. von Simson, p. 18; trans. Coupland.
[6] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 33, p. 72.
[7] For Audradus, see *inter alia* W. Mohr, 'Audradus von Sens, Prophet und Kirchenpolitiker (um 850)', *Archivium Latinitatis Medii Ævi*, 29 (1959), pp. 239-67.

emendationem se ullo modo sed apertissime ad provocandum super se magis iram Dei omnipotentis converterunt [...].[1]

Many later chroniclers also reported the same cataclysmic event.[2] The monastery of Saint-Martin at Tours was after all where Alcuin had established a renowned school for Charlemagne, where the Holy Saint Martin was buried, and the town was often seen as the Rome of Gaul.[3]

In terms of the Scandinavian raids in France this was the first time that the Northmen had ever ventured so far up the Loire. It would not be the last time.

852-853: The Seine and the Loire

Oskar's fleet had returned to Aquitaine and the Loire after its second expedition up the Seine. It was probably in the autumn of 853 and before their attack on Tours that these Northmen were confronted by another Scandinavian fleet led by a chieftain called Sidroc who had himself also been recently raiding on the Seine. But before examining this confrontation we must thus first go back to the Seine.

In the summer of 852 Charles the Bald and his half-brother the emperor Lothar had met at Saint Quentin (dep. Aisne), a meeting initiated by Charles according to Prudentius:

> Charles invited his brother Lothar to come and have talks with him at Augusta of the Vermandi, a place made distinguished by the body of the blessed martyr Quentin. He received him in brotherly fashion, treated him with due honour, negotiated with him fraternally, loaded him royally with gifts and kindly escorted him on his way back.[4]

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[1] *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 7, ed. Bouquet, pp. 291-92. The *Liber revelationum* is known only from passages quoted by Alberic of Trois-Fontaines in the 13th century. See 'Audradus Modicus, chorévêque de Sens', in A. Molinier (ed.), *Les Sources de l'Histoire de France : des origines aux guerres d'Italie, 1494. I. Époque primitive, mérovingiens et carolingiens*, 3 vols (Paris, 1901), vol. 1, pp. 250-51. Also see L. Traube, 'O Roma nobilis: Philologische Untersuchungen aus dem Mittelalter', *Abhandlungen der Historischen Klasse der Königlich-Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 19 (1891), pp. 299-395, at pp. 374-91. Given this reliable report that the body of Saint Martin had been removed from Tours to Cormery shortly before the attack it is quite possible that Prudentius, who reports the same thing, got his information from Audradus or they both got it from a common source.

[2] It was also reported by Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: trans. MacLean, p. 133, in the early tenth century, this time under the correct date of 853, and in other later sources for which see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 141, n. 3. For example, in the *Chronicon Sancti Martini Turonensis*: 'Anno [Domini] DCCCLIII, episcoporum hujus ecclesiae tabulae, ut et abbatum, et ejusdem antique monumenta, per Danos seu Northmannos combusta fuere' (cf. *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. Salmon, p. 218).

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 140 and n. 2; F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', pp. 694-95 and nn. 22, 23.

[4] *AB* 852: ed. Grat, p. 64; trans. Nelson, p. 74. J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 74, n. 3: 'This meeting did effectively seal an alliance between Lothar and Charles.'

This newly re-established cordial fraternity was soon tested because on 9 October 852, Saint Denis's day, four months after Oskar had left to return to Aquitaine a new fleet or fleets commanded by Godfrid Haraldsson ('Godefridus Herioldi Dani filius') and a chieftain called Sidroc arrived on the Seine.[1] They first rowed upriver to a place called *Augustudunas*, which could well be Les Damps near Pont-de-l'Arche (dep. Eure).[2] Lothar joined Charles and they acted together, besieging the Northmen over the early winter and Christmas period. The brothers celebrated Christmas together while the blockade was going on. One of the reasons Lothar might have come to Charles's aid was possibly because Godfrid had recently defected from him,[3] and before arriving on the Seine he had been raiding in Lothar's own Middle Kingdom - in fact in Flanders.

Around the turn of the New Year, Prudentius makes the elusive but rather critical comment that Charles's contingent 'did not want to fight' and so Charles and his men withdrew 'having achieved no advantage at all'.[4] He continues, 'Charles got Godfrid to make peace with him on certain agreed conditions' (*quibusdam pactionibus*). As one might expect the East Frankish *Annals of Fulda* were slightly more scathing. Having mentioned the Northmen under *dux Godafrid* coming up the Seine to plunder Charles's kingdom, they say that 'Lothar was called to help with their expulsion and thought that he had come with his men to fight; but Charles changed his plan secretly, received Godafrid with his men into the alliance of his kingdom and gave them lands to live on. Lothar, seeing that his coming was pointless, returned to his own lands'.[5] Coupland explains the unwillingness of Charles's Franks to fight not as a sign of cowardice or because of any disloyalty towards Charles but rather as being because 'the Franks recognised that the Vikings were in a virtually impregnable position, not only because of the advantage enjoyed by any entrenched defending army, but above all because the Franks did not have river craft which could land on the island'.[6] This might well have been true but it is just one interpretation. Whatever the case Godfrid had been bought off either by a payment of tribute or by a grant of land or even both.

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[1] *ChrFont s.a.* 852: ed. Laporte, p. 89; trans. Coupland: 'In the year 852 a fleet led by the Danes Sidroc and Godfrid [actually 'classis Sydroc et Godefridi ducum Danorum'] entered the Seine on 9 October and came as far as Augustudunae. Lothar and Charles, the glorious kings, besieged them, but the Northmen spent the winter at a place called Jeufosse, relying on the river for protection, and in the month of June they left and put to sea.' See also *AB* 852, 853: ed. Grat, pp. 65-66; trans. Nelson, pp. 75-76; *AF s.a.* 850 [=852]: ed. Kurze, pp. 39-40; trans. Reuter, p. 30.
[2] Cf. S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 94; *idem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 38 and n. 60.
[3] J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 75, n. 9; *eadem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 170.
[4] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 65; trans. Nelson, p. 75.
[5] *AF s.a.* 850 [=852]: ed. Kurze, pp. 39-40; trans. Reuter, p. 30.
[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 38.

But what had Godfrid got? Supporting the tribute argument is that the expression used by Prudentius 'qui busdam pactionibus' is exactly the same phrase he used to describe the tribute paid to Ragnar (*Reginheri*) in 845 to get him to leave the Seine.[1] Also telling against Godfrid having received a grant of land in Charles's kingdom is that Godfrid was a Frisian-based chieftain and he was certainly back in Frisia by 855, from where he and his cousin Rorik launched an unsuccessful bid to 'gain royal power' in Denmark.[2] Frisia was in Lothar's realm and Charles was not in any position to grant Godfrid land there. It will be remembered that the Fulda annalist wrote that Charles had received Godfrid 'with his men into the alliance of his kingdom and gave them lands to live on', so presumably meaning a benefice in West Francia. If that had been so Godfrid would probably not have been in any position to be back in Lothar's territory two years later.[3] Finally, as Coupland says, the Fulda account 'was written in the eastern Frankish kingdom, far from the scene of events, and was included under the wrong year',[4] which it was.[5] Yet some historians do suggest that Godfrid was perhaps granted land possibly in Flanders or even in Frisia. Walther Vogel thought a payment of tribute was 'probable'.[6] However, after mentioning the Fulda annalist's claim that Godfrid had become Charles's vassal and that land was granted to him Vogel said that 'this report cannot simply be discarded, Prudentius certainly does not confirm it explicitly, but expresses himself so obliquely (*verblümt*) that one can assume he had remained silent about the full truth out of respect (*rücksicht*) for the king'.[7] He added that if such a grant had been made it should be sought in Flanders where Godfrid seems to have arrived from, and he observes that the monks of the monastery of Saint-Bavon at Ghent in Flanders had at that time removed their relics and their church treasure from Saint Omer to Laon.[8] There is much more that could be said about Godfrid Haraldsson and his activities, and whether or not he received any benefice in Flanders or elsewhere in early 853 but regrettably space does not allow a fuller examination here.[9] Timothy Reuter references Walther Vogel who drew attention to a capitulary

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[1] See *AB* 845: ed. Grat, p. 49; trans. Nelson, p. 60.
[2] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80.
[3] S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 94-95.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 95, no. 56.
[5] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 71, proposes with a certain reasonableness that after first offering Godfrid land he then changed his mind because he now had the support of Lothar and therefore just accorded Godfrid 'un lieu d'hivernage'.
[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 135.
[7] *Ibid*., my translation
[8] *Ibid*. R. Parisot, *Le royaume de Lorraine sous les Carolingiens (843-923)* (Paris, 1898), pp. 42-43, 63, suggested much the same thing. The attacks on Ghent in Flanders and who was responsible is much debated; it is not certain it was Godfrid.
[9] For Godfrid, see in the first instance S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 93-95.

issued by Charles the Bald at Soissons on 22 April 853[1] in which Charles orders his *missi* to compile a list (*inbrevient*) of what had been given to the Northmen 'by our commendation' (*per nostrum commendationem*). Reuter says that '*inbreviare* is more likely to refer to land than to tribute'.[2] This seems unlikely. When we read the whole capitulary, we can clearly see that the *missi* were being sent out to make an inventory of ecclesiastical properties and their treasures, and to ascertain what had been taken from them by the Northmen either forcibly during their raids or on Charles's 'commendation';[3] that is as part of the usual demands made on the church by Frankish kings to pay the Northmen tributes to leave.[4]

The agreement with Godfrid seems to have taken place at the end of December 852 or the very beginning of January 853, after which Charles had probably dismissed his perhaps reluctant army left the Seine and gone with Lothar to the distant royal palace of Quierzy (dep. Aisne), where the two brothers celebrated Epiphany (6 January) together with great joy and where Lothar became the godfather to Charles's daughter.[5] A few days later Lothar set off for home.[6]

It is usually said by historians that the Franks had blockaded/besieged the Northmen on the island of Jeufosse (dep. Yvelines). This is because the monk of Fontenelle wrote that after first coming to *Augustudunas* 'Lothar and Charles, the glorious kings, besieged them, but the Northmen spent the winter at a place called Jeufosse, relying on the river for protection'.[7] However this interpretation is not certain. It might well be that the Frankish blockade up to the turn of the year had taken place at an island situated near Les Damps (of which there were and are several), and that it was after Godfrid had left that Sidroc's force had moved upriver to the island of Jeufosse for the rest of the winter. This interpretation is somewhat supported by Prudentius's statement that *after* Godfrid had been bought off during the blockade 'the rest of the Danes (*ceteri Danorum*) settled down there [on the Seine] right through to March without needing to feel the least anxiety',[8] no doubt because both Charles and Lothar had left the area. Sidroc's Northmen then 'ravaged, burned and took captives all the more savagely for being

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[1] See *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, eds. A. Boretius and V. Krause, *MGH*, *Leges* (Hanover, 1897), no. 259, pp. 266-70.
[2] T. Reuter, *The Annals of Fulda*, p. 31, n. 3.
[3] *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 259, p. 267: 'Quid etiam Nortmannis per nostrum commendationem sive sine nostra commendation datum sit, quidve relictum vel quid a quaquam ibi in eleemosyna datum'. P. Grierson, 'The *Gratia Dei Rex* coinage of Charles the Bald', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald. Court and Kingdom*, pp. 52-64, at p. 60 and n. 17, suggests that this capitulary refers to a 'Danegeld' paid earlier in 853 to 'Godfrid's army', but it might also, or in addition, refer to extractions made to pay off Sidroc (see later).
[4] F. Lot, 'Godfried et Sidroc', pp. 688-89, n. 15. See also É. Palazzo, 'Le Livre Dans Les Trésors du Moyen Age. Contribution à l'histoire de la Memoria médiévale', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales*, 52. 1 (1997), pp. 93-118.
[5] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, p. 76.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] *ChrFont s.a.* 852: ed. Laporte, p. 89; trans. Coupland.
[8] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, pp. 75-76.

completely unrestrained'.[1] This looks like Prudentius rather acerbically commenting on what happens when the Franks declined to fight the Northmen, a thing he did quite often.

Presumably after spending April and May on the lower Seine, perhaps waiting for good weather and/or refitting their ships, Sidroc's fleet then took to the sea, in June according to the monk of Fontenelle or in July according to Prudentius.[2] It headed for the Loire. Prudentius says that the departing Northmen then 'went to the Loire where they sacked the town of Nantes and the monastery of St-Florent and its neighbourhood',[3] which again looks very similar to the report in the *Annals of Angoulême*. But whether Sidroc's fleet left in June or July they would have had to sail all the way round Brittany to get to the Loire. But it was in June according to the local *Annals of Angoulême* that Nantes and then the monastery of Saint-Florent were burned. In the case of a June departure such an itinerary seems very unlikely, and in the case of Prudentius's departure date of July it is quite impossible. I suggest Prudentius, who was living at this time in faraway Troyes, had heard of the fleet leaving the Seine in the summer of 853 and of the burning of Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent, possibly directly or indirectly from the Angoulême annalist or from a common informant, and put two and two together and made five. In a similar vein, Lot said: 'Prudence n'a eu que des renseignements confus sur l'événement. Il sait qu'il y a eu une occupation de Nantes par les païens et que Sidroc, venu de la Seine, est arrivé devant cette ville. Il en a conclu que c'était lui qui a pillé Nantes. L'erreur était aisée à commettre pour un homme habitant loin de là dans le diocèse de Troyes.'[4] The attacks on Nantes and Saint-Florent had in fact been undertaken by Oskar's force. Had Sidroc been paid off like Godfrid? Lot was adamant about this: 'Alors sans doute intervint un pacte avec Sidroc pour qu'il abandonnât la Seine […]. Nous allons la [his fleet] retrouver sur la Loire.'[5] I can only agree. Why would Sidroc have not asked for money or some other benefit, as had Godfrid? We will return to this matter shortly.

Betia: Oskar, Sidroc and Erispoë

A near contemporary account of some of the Northmen's activities sheds more light on these matters; it is called today the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* (*The Acts of the Saints of Redon*). The Breton monastery of Saint-Sauveur was situated at Redon on the Vilaine in the Vannetais

[1] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, p. 76; my emphasis.
[2] *ChrFont* 852: ed. Laporte, p. 89; *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, p. 76. F. Lot, 'Godfried et Sidroc', p. 689 and n. 17, suggested that Sidroc's fleet might even have left the Seine as early as April.
[3] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, p. 76.
[4] F. Lot, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 711.
[5] F. Lot, 'Godfried et Sidroc', p. 689.

just north of the Loire. The Vilaine in fact was the border dividing the counties of Nantes and Vannes.[1]

According to Ferdinand Lot the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* was written by the Redon monk Ratvili between 868 and 876,[2] although the *Gesta's* latest editor and translator, Caroline Brett, argues that a date as late as 900 is even possible.[3] It tells how a fleet of 105 ships under a chieftain called *Sidric* - obviously the 'Sidroc' of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* and to avoid unnecessary confusion I will use the single spelling Sidroc from now on - had arrived on the Loire where it found another fleet of Northmen already ensconced in a *castrum* on the small island of *Betia*.[4] This *insula Betia* is usually identified with the Île de Bièce now part of the present Île de Nantes which is encircled by two branches of the Loire, the 'bras de la Madeleine' to the north and the 'bras de Pirmil' to the south,[5] but more recently the Île Botty, slightly down river of the town, has been suggested.[6]

We are told that these earlier Northmen had already attacked and burned Nantes and other regions in the area *by the time* Sidroc arrived. This implies that it was Oskar's fleet which had (perhaps rather quickly) thrown up some earthen or wooden defences on the island of *Betia* after already having burned Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent in June. Sidroc's fleet might have arrived in the early autumn of 853 which would fit with them having left the Seine in July (or June) although other later dates have been suggested as will be discussed later. Sidroc's ships then besieged the other Northmen on *Betia*, encircling the island so that no one

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[1] For the Vilaine region see J.-C. Cassard, 'La basse Vilaine, une marche de guerre au haut Moyen Âge', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 110 (2003), pp. 29-47.

[2] F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 22. 1 (1906), pp. 1-28, at pp. 5-13; *idem*, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 710, n. 22; followed by numerous other historians.

[3] C. Brett, ed. and trans. *The Monks of Redon, Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium and Vita Conuuoionis*, *Studies in Celtic History*, 10 (Woodbridge, 1989), p. 9.

[4] The whole story in Latin and English translation is found in *The Monks of Redon,* ed. and trans. C. Brett, III, 9, pp. 212-19. Both the so-called *Chronicle of Nantes* (*La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, pp. 84-87) and the later *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* (*Chronica Sancti Maxentii Pictavensis*, in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, p. 364) take the basic story of the 'siege' of *Betia* from the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, but in the first case place it wrongly in connection with events at Nantes in about 920, and in the second case date it to 844 (*sic*). F. Lot, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', pp. 706-12, provides a full discussion of both and shows that neither version adds anything of independent worth to the story in the Redon *Gesta*. For a fuller discussion of the use made of the *GSR* in the *Chronicle of Nantes* see F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 22. 3 (1906), pp. 414-52.

[5] To be a little more geographically specific, in earlier times the present Île de Nantes consisted of a number of small islands: the Île de Beaulieu, the Île de Sainte-Anne, the Île de Petite Biesse, and the Île de Grande Biesse, plus some others. Generally, because of swords found in the Loire near the part of the present Île de Nantes at the Île de Beaulieu, this is often the spot claimed to be where the naval engagement in 853 took place; see for example I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 37 and n. 25; G. Durville, 'Les épées normandes de l'île de Bièce'.

[6] For the Botty suggestion see N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, p. 271, n. 1, p. 275, n. 2. This possible location for *Betia* was first put forward by J.-P. Brunterc'h. The Île Botty is now part of the southern mainland of the Loire.

could get in or out. Sidroc then sent messengers to the Breton prince Erispoë asking him to come to help him defeat the Northmen established on *Betia*; if they acted with one mind and one will they would wipe the besieged Northmen who had 'destroyed his lands' from the face of the earth. Erispoë gathered his army from all parts of his kingdom and came to help the leader of the Northmen (*duci Normannorum*), intent 'to fight off these enemies and pagans who had long troubled Christian regions and provinces'.[1] Erispoë's Bretons and Sidroc's Northmen began to fight with the Northmen on *Betia*; the battle lasted all day and many were killed. Sidroc himself was wounded. Night brought an end to the fight and the Northmen on *Betia* withdrew to their camp. But early the next morning the surrounded Northmen 'made peace with' Sidroc by giving him much gold and silver, and the two chieftains made a pact (*foederati*). Taking his booty with him Sidroc then swiftly departed for the open sea, heading we are explicitly told in the *Gesta* back to the Seine.[2] The Bretons left too.

It seems that Oskar's forces left behind on *Betia* might have needed to replenish their accumulated treasure which they had used to buy off Sidroc. But they also clearly wanted to take some revenge on the Bretons. The writer of the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* says that the Northmen who had been besieged (hence Oskar's) then sailed in 103 ships out of the Loire to the sea and then travelled a short way up the coast of new Brittany where they entered the Vilaine and encamped two miles from the important Breton monastery of Redon. The *Gesta* says quite explicitly that it was the Northmen who had been besieged who came with rage and indignation to repay the Bretons for the hurt they had caused them during the recent 'battle of the ships' (*nauali proelio*) at *Betia*. This clearly excludes it being Sidroc's fleet, which was the besieger. But the abbey was somehow saved. According to the *Gesta* a monk called Hincmar had called on God to save them, a violent storm was God's answer. This supposedly so terrified

[1] Might the fact that the Redon monk says that the earlier Northmen on *Betia* had 'destroyed' his [Erispoë's] 'lands' and 'had long troubled Christian regions and provinces' be significant? I think it could be. Clearly the *GSR* is talking about the earlier Northmen, and as we saw in the previous chapter Oskar's force had indeed attacked both Breton lands and other 'Christian regions and provinces', indeed in adjacent provinces, whereas with Godfrid, for example, this was not the case.

[2] The Redon monk however added that Sidroc along with his people was later killed on the Seine by Charles [the Bald]! This seems far from accurate. According to the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* (*ChrFont* 855: ed. Laporte, pp. 88-89; trans. Coupland), Sidroc arrived back on the Seine in July 855: 'In the year 855, the fourth Indiction, a very large fleet of Danes entered the river Seine on 18 July, led by the same Sidroc'. The 'same Sidroc' here refers to the Sidroc who had arrived with Godfrid in October 852. However, most historians would place his arrival in August 856, giving more credence to Prudentius's report (cf. *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 72; trans. Nelson, p. 82), which does not, however, name Sidroc. This is not the place to enter into this discussion for which see to start with S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 44 and notes), but if we accept the 856 dating then Sidroc had left the Seine in 857; see *ChrFont s.a.* 855 [=856]: ed. Laporte, pp. 90-91; trans. Coupland: 'The following year [857] Sidroc left the river.' We do not know when Sidroc died, although I will say more about him shortly, but he and his men were certainly not killed by Charles the Bald on the Seine in 856-857, nor as far as I can see by Charles the Bald at any other time. Cf. F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 726, n. 1; *idem*, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', pp. 11, 67.

the Northmen that they made a solemn vow that if they were spared from death they would not violate the monastery and would leave 'gold, silver, and candles beyond counting' on the altar, which they did the next day. More pseudo-miraculous details are given. Jean-Christophe Cassard has convincingly argued that what probably happened was the opposite: that the monks of Redon had bought off the Northmen camped nearby, who then left,[1] and, according to the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, then penetrated further into the province, pillaging, capturing men and women, and burning houses, although many captives managed to escape and flee back to Redon.[2]

We know of two illustrious victims who, most probably at this time, fell into the Northmen's hands: the bishop of Vannes Courantgen and Pascweten the powerful Breton count of Vannes. When a charter was issued by the Breton duke Erispoë in the episcopal *solarium* at Vannes it was said that the bishop of Vannes (Courantgen) was still being held by the Northmen ('Factum est hoc in Veneti civitate, in solario episcopi, Normandis ipsum episcopum captivum tenentibus').[3] This charter is usually dated to March 854,[4] a date which is accepted here although with some reservations. If Courantgen was still being held by Northmen in March 854 he could have been captured in, say, the late autumn of 853, which is what the present reconstruction of events would suggest because it was Oskar's fleet which had sailed to the Vilaine to take revenge for Erispoë's attack on them at the island of *Betia*, and it was Oskar not

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[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 19-25; *idem*, 'En marge des incursions vikings', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 98. 3 (1991), pp. 261-72, at pp. 262-64; *idem*, 'Avant les Normands, les Vikings en Bretagne', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 97-107, at pp. 99-100. Cassard places the naval siege of *Betia* in 853, as do I, but he says 'Avant les Normands', p. 99: 'Si Sidric, après avoir soulagé de leur butin les premiers arrivés, remonte la Loire pour continuer en amont son raid [meaning no doubt the attack on Tours in November], les spoliés hivernent sur place puis, au printemps suivant, ils remettent à flot leurs embarcations et mettent le cap sur le monastère Saint-Sauveur de Redon.' After which we hear no more about either Sidroc or the 'premiers arrivés' (Oskar's fleet?). There are problems with this scenario. Putting the raid on Redon down to those who had been besieged by Sidroc is correct. But dating it to 854 is just a conjecture. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the bishop of Vannes was still being held hostage by the Northmen in March 854? (for which see below). However, suggesting that these 'besieged' Northmen had then spent the winter on their new base on the island of *Betia* before going to the Vilaine, in what would appear to be very early in 854 according to Cassard, is just an unfounded assumption. Similarly regarding Sidroc, if he had attacked Tours in late 853 what did he do after that? The *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* says that after *Betia* Sidroc had left 'heading for the Seine'. The main problem with Cassard's scenario is that like many other historians - who have differing interpretations - Cassard is not really concerned with who all these Northmen were, nor with their activities both before and after the naval 'battle' at *Betia*. It is only by doing so that we might gain a better appreciation of what really happened.

[2] C. Brett (ed. and trans.), *The Monks of Redon*, pp. 218-19.

[3] *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint Sauveur de Redon en Bretagne* (Paris, 1863), ed. A. de Courson [hereafter *Cartulaire de Redon*], Appendix, no. 40, p. 369.

[4] A. de La Borderie, 'La chronologie du Cartulaire de Redon', *Annales de Bretagne*, 13 (1898), pp. 590-611, at p. 600, argues for 1 March, whereas de Courson, *Cartulaire de Redon*, p. 369, suggests 11 March. F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 693, n. 13, accepts the date of 854 although perhaps also with reservations. Courantgen had certainly been released before December 854, probably having been ransomed. Cf. A. de La Borderie, 'La chronologie du Cartulaire de Redon', *Annales de Bretagne*, 12 (1897), pp. 473-522, at p. 481; *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 13, pp. 19-20; F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 693, n. 13.

Sidroc who had attacked and burned Tours in November 853. It was likely around or at the same time that Pascweten was also captured. In another Redon charter which is precisely dated to 8 July 857 Pascweten recompensed the monks of Redon for the expense they had incurred to obtain his release from the Northmen ('ad Pascuueten in ejus redemption de Normandis').[1] The monks had paid for his release with a gold chalice and gold *patèn*e,[2] and Pascweten had reimbursed them by giving the community a *villa* at *Bron Aril* and a *saline* in Guérande.[3]

Finally, although Sidroc seems to have only made a brief incursion into the Loire in 853 in a work about the connections of the Scandinavians in Aquitaine and along the Loire we still need to ask if we can say anything about who he was and where he had come from before we first hear of him on the Seine late the year before.

The fact is we really do not know anything of Sidroc's origins. As far as I am aware there is not a single mention in any early or later source of any chieftain called Sidroc (ON Sigtryggr) or similar in Scandinavia or elsewhere in western Europe before the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* describes the Scandinavian force on the Seine in 852-853 as being the *classis* of 'Sydroc et Godefridi ducum Danorum'. We should not place too much reliance on the monk of Fontenelle's description of both Godfrid and Sidroc as chieftains, or perhaps better *jarls*, of the Danes even though Prudentius did call Godfrid 'Godefridus Herioldi Dani filiu*s*'[4] and Godfrid was without any doubt a Frisian-based ethnic Dane. But perhaps the fact that Godfrid and Sidroc were in league, even if only briefly, just might suggest a common Danish origin. Nor should we pay too much attention to Prudentius's statement that the Northmen who left the Seine for the Loire in the summer of 853 (doubtless Sidroc's) were *Dani*. Nevertheless, Sidroc could well have been a Danish chieftain or even a Frisian-based Dane.[5] This opinion might gain some tentative support from the possibility that Sidroc could have been the 'older' *jarl* Sidroc who died at the battle of Ashdown in 871 fighting the West Saxons, an identity suggested by Ferdinand Lot and Simon Coupland.[6] Additionally, if as I will argue in a future article Sidroc may have been one of the Danish 'returning pirates' who in 854 tried to grab some position

[1] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 26, pp. 21-22.
[2] The plate used for the Eucharist.
[3] See also J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 24. This capture of Pascweten is also reported in the eleventh century without any precise date: see *Vita Gildae auctore monacho Rviensi*, ed. T. Mommsen, *MGH, Auctores antiquissimi*, 13. 3 (Berlin, 1898), pp. 101-2; F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne: Gildae vita et translatio (Suite et fin)', *Annales de Bretagne*, 25. 3 (1909), pp. 493-519, at pp. 503-4.
[4] The *Annals of Fulda s.a.* 850 [=852]: trans. Reuter, p. 30, say: 'The Northmen and their *dux* Godafrid came up the Seine.'
[5] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 170, argued that Sidroc had come from the Frisian coast.
[6] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 726, n. 1; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40, n. 83. Although if this were so where had Sidroc been operating after his disappearance from France in 857 until his death in England in 871?

back home in Denmark then a Danish origin could be right.[1] Finally, although I think he is being a little too emphatic, I do somewhat agree with Etchingham when he states that 'it seems that Sidric's primarily Danish Vikings briefly intruded in 853 into the "patch" of the Atlantic seaboard or Loire Vikings'[2]. Etchingham also proposes a parallel with the situation in Ireland. The 'Dane' Sidroc had enriched himself on the Loire, as had the Danish *Dubgenti* 'Black Heathens' in Ireland.[3] As he puts it, the 'arrival of Danish Vikings on the Loire in 853 presents a striking parallel with the brief but devastating appearance of primarily Danish *Dubgenti* 'Black Heathens' in Ireland in 851-2'.[4]

Control and state of the town of Nantes

What sort of state was the town of Nantes in when the Northmen returned there in 853? And who was in control - if anyone?

Ferdinand Lot argued that since the town's gates and walls had been partially demolished by the Breton duke Nominoë in 850 Nantes had become 'untenable'.[5] So when the Northmen arrived there three years later it would have been relatively easy for them to enter and burn the town. But this does not necessarily mean the town was denuded of people who were certainly under some sort of authority. Following Nominoë's death on 7 March 851,[6] at a meeting with Charles the Bald held at Angers in September or October[7] his son Erispoë had been given the counties of Rennes, Nantes and the *pays de Retz*, on top of the lands his father had previously held. In fact, this grant of what would soon start to be called 'New Brittany' was in reality only a recognition of Erispoë's position on the ground, a position that Charles was forced, probably rather grudgingly, to recognise because of Erispoë's important victory over Charles's Franks at

[1] S. M. Lewis, '854 and all that: The fight for power in Denmark', forthcoming. A suggestion also briefly made by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40, and see also C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7.4. See also in this regard S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark: An exploration of the case of Hálfdan, "king of the Danes"', pp. 22-26.
[2] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7. I am not greatly enamoured with the concept of strict 'Danish' or 'Norwegian' 'patches', an idea that goes back to the work of Lucien Musset and before him to Walther Vogel.
[3] C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 692.
[6] *AB* 851: ed. Grat, p. 60; trans. Nelson, p. 69; *AAng s.a.* 851, p. 486; *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 84-85; trans. Coupland: 'In the year 851, the fourteenth Indiction, by God's judgement the Breton leader Nominoë brought his evil scheming to an end and thus perished on the Frankish borders.' Cf. also H. Pettiau, 'A Prosopography of Breton Rulership, AD 818-952', *Journal of Celtic Studies*, 4 (2004), pp. 179-80.
[7] *AB* 851: ed. Grat, pp. 63-64; trans. Nelson, p. 73. For the date of the meeting at Angers see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 283-84.

the battle of Jengland-Beslé (near Redon) on 22 August of the same year, which was a humiliation for Charles.[1]

In regard to the state of the town of Nantes during this period, we should first look forward a little.

Following the burning of Nantes and the subsequent naval siege of the island of *Betia*, both in 853, Lot argued: 'Le duc [Erispoë] n'eut, en réalité, aucun effort à faire pour recouvrer Nantes. En effet, les pirates d'Aquitaine ne l'occupèrent plus […]. La ville était au surplus ruinée, incendiée. Sa possession était essentiellement précaire.'[2] Similarly Vogel said that after the first sack of Nantes in 843 the town had only just started a recovery but still stood defencelessly open (*widerstandlos offen*) when the Northmen returned in 853.[3] Be that as it may, on 10 February 856 Erispoë met with Charles the Bald at a great assembly held at Louviers (dep. Eure).[4] During this assembly there was a *rapprochement* between Erispoë and Charles, and Charles betrothed his young son Louis (later called 'the Stammerer') to Erispoë's daughter. Prudentius says: 'King Charles made peace terms with the Breton Erispoë, to whose daughter he betrothed his own son Louis.'[5] It was at the same assembly that most historians suggest that two diplomas/charters were issued, both related to the situation at Nantes.[6] In the first charter Erispoë granted the bishop of Nantes, Actard, half of the *tonlieu* of Nantes in compensation for the earlier ravages his diocese had suffered at the hands of 'pirates and pagans'.[7] In a second charter Charles confirmed the grant made by Erispoë to Actard.[8] Hubert Guillotel suggested

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[1] For the location and dating of this decisive battle see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 280-83; F. Lot, 'Vivien et Larchamp', *Romania*, 35 (1906), pp. 258-77, at pp. 263-66; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 60. I follow Hubert Guillotel's lead in calling it hereafter 'Jengland-Beslé'. For the battle itself see Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 78-79; trans. MacLean, pp. 136-37; *AAng s.a.* 851, p. 486; Lupus of Ferrières, *Correspondance*, no. 83, p. 69; *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, I.7, in C. Brett (ed. and trans.), *Monks of Redon*, pp. 128-31. Good overviews are to be found in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *ibid.*; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 99-100; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 60-62.

[2] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 693, n. 14. For the same view see F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 809-10, n. 5.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 137-38.

[4] The date of this assembly was established by A. Giry, 'Sur la date de deux diplômes de l'Église de Nantes et de l'alliance de Charles le Chauve avec Erispoé', *Annales de Bretagne*, 13 (1898), its location by F. Lot, 'Mélanges carolingiennes. I. Veteres Domus', *Le Moyen Âge*, 17 (1904), pp. 465-77, reprinted in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2 (1970), pp. 522-34.

[5] *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 72; trans. Nelson, pp. 81-82.

[6] Both charters are undated. That they were both issued at the assembly at Louviers was proposed by Giry (*ibid.*); an opinion followed *inter alia* by F. Lot (*ibid.*) and H. Guillotel, in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 292. P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes et les translations d'évêques *propter infestationem paganorum*', *Le Moyen Âge*, 117 (2011), pp. 9-20, does not mention these charters, but just follows Guillotel in placing Actard's return to Nantes 'avant 856' (at p. 11, n. 10). R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, pp. 44-45, n. 2; p. 47, n. 1, would place their issue in 857.

[7] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 14, p. 49 and p. 46, n. 1.

[8] The texts of both these charters are found in *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, pp. 44-48. The second in A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 529.

that Erispoë would only have been able to make this grant to Actard if the Breton duke had still controlled the town at this point.[1] Arthur de La Borderie had earlier suggested that by 856 Nantes must have returned to its normal trading activities and was once again a flourishing mercantile town. Otherwise, he asks, how could Erispoë have been able to provide any income stream for Actard from the *tonlieu* of the town?[2] Although Vogel tended to agree that the two charters were issued at Louviers in February 856 of much more importance for him was that it was highly doubtful that Nantes was *not* still occupied by the Northmen at this time because they only left the Loire in early 857 at the earliest, and thus Nantes could not have once again been 'flourishing' in 856. Thus, according to Vogel, the two charters more probably indicate a hope that the *tonlieu* of Nantes would be able to become productive or yield a revenue ('*ergiebig*') for Actard at some undetermined point in the future.[3]

In order to cast further light on the situation at Nantes in the 850s let us go back a little. The control of Nantes and the surrounding districts, including the *pays de Retz*, from 843 until 853 is both highly complex and extremely obscure and I cannot go into it in detail here. Guillotel provides an excellent summary.[4] Actard had been made the bishop of Nantes in 843 or 844[5] following the Northmen's slaying of the previous bishop, Gunhard, during the sack of the town in the summer of 843.[6] Over the course of the next years there was a continuation of what René Merlet called the 'Wars of Breton Independence'.[7] In 850, Nominoë's Bretons managed to capture the towns of Rennes and Nantes, the latter from the very recently arrived Frankish count Amalric.[8]

By way of background to all this, in August of 846 Charles the Bald and Nominoë had come to a new accord which seems to have lasted until 849.[9] But it was probably in June of this latter

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[1] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 293.
[2] A. de La Borderie, *ibid*. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 138, n. 2.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 138, n. 3.
[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 267-78.
[5] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 9, p. 26 and n. 2; P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings : Actard de Nantes', p. 11.
[6] For which see the previous chapter.
[7] Cf. R. Merlet, 'Guerres d'indépendance de la Bretagne sous Nominoé et Erispoé (841-851)', *Revue de Bretagne, de Vendée et d'Anjou*, 6 (1891), pp. 5-104.
[8] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 84-85; trans. Coupland: 'In the year 850 [...] Count Lambert and his brother Warner were planning tyranny and broke faith, forming an alliance with the Breton tyrant, Nominoë. But shortly afterwards Warner was captured by Count Gauzbert and brought before the King. King Charles came as far as the town of Rennes with an army and set out his defences, but when he withdrew from the city Nominoë and Lambert set about storming it with a large number of followers. Our defenders were terrified at this and surrendered, and they were exiled to Brittany [...]. At this time Nominoë, the leader of the Bretons, and the tyrant Lambert captured Count Amalric and many others in the city of Nantes.' J. Laporte (in *ChrFont*, p. 85, n. 50) suggested that Amalric had replaced Lambert as count of Nantes after Lambert had once again rallied to Nominoë's cause, which would seem to be the case. See also J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 51-52, for an overview.
[9] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 266; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 49-51. Whether Nominoë had remained loyal to Charles until 849 has been questioned. The monk who wrote

year that Charles had reappointed the errant Lambert as count of Nantes, doubtless whilst Charles was holding an assembly at Auzainville near to Chartres.[1] In fact it is more than likely that Lambert had not just been granted Nantes, or even the Nantais and the *pays de Retz*, but also the whole of the March of Brittany that his father had once held.[2] Still referring to events in 849, the monk of Fontenelle says that 'the Breton tyrant, Nominoë, reached the city of Angers, and the march (*marka*) was given back to Count Lambert'.[3] It was probably in the spring of 849 whilst Charles was on his way to Aquitaine - and hence before the assembly held at Auzainville near to Chartres - that Nominoë had 'perfidiously' rebelled.[4] Prudentius says that 'Charles marched into Aquitaine. Nominoë the Breton, with his usual treachery, attacked Anjou and the surrounding district'.[5] But with regard to Lambert his new defection from Charles to his erstwhile

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the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* says: 'In the year 847 we travelled to the palace at Baizieux [in the Bessin] on account of various estates. The envoys visited our lord the King there and reported the downfall of the Breton Mangil (*Mangili*) and his followers, who had been killed by Count Gerfrid (*Gairfridus*)' (*ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 78-79; trans. Coupland). This visit took place between 23 March and 19 April 847 (see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 266). The passage is discussed with very different conclusions by F. Lot and L. Halphen in *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, p. 183, n. 1; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *ibid.*; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 50. Bretons seem to have been raiding around Bayeux from Christmas of 846. J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 97 and n. 43, suggests that this was because the Emperor Lothar had 'importuned Nominoe to defect again and resume raiding Neustria.' She references here the *Historia Translationis Corporum Sanctorum Ragnoberti et Zenonis*, *AA*, *SS*, Mai III (Paris, 1866), p. 621a (for the date of this raid around Christmas 846 see F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve*, p. 174, n. 1), as is also mentioned by H. Guillotel (*ibid.*). The involvement of Nominoë in this 'resumption of raiding in Neustria' has been called into question by J.-C. Cassard (*Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 50), who thinks that the attack over Christmas 846 in the region of Bayeux was undertaken by the same 'celtes' led by 'Maengi (Mangilus) killed in early 847 (in which he is following Guillotel), but that the 'tacit complicity' of Nominoë is impossible to establish and that nothing is assured. H. Guillotel (*ibid.*) concludes that the count 'Geoffrey' who had killed the Breton 'Mangil' can only have been the count of Rennes and that the region of Bayeux was really only accessible from the north of Brittany 'limitrophe du Rennais'. In this both Guillotel and Cassard (*ibid.*) refer to, and 'translate', the decision taken at the assembly called by Louis the German at Meersen in February/March 847 and attended by his brothers Lothar and Charles to send envoys to the Breton *dux* [Nominoë]; for which E. J. Goldberg, *Struggle for Empire*, *Kingship and Conflict under Louis the German, 817-876* (Ithaca and London, 2006), p. 152, for the context and the reference. Ultimately, Guillotel thinks that Count Geoffrey may have 'mis en œuvre des décisions arrêtées à Meersen'. Unfortunately, I cannot explore these most interesting events and issues further here, but in terms of Nominoë, and as was explored in Chapter 3, he had fought the Northmen three times over the period from the end of 846 to early 847 somewhere around the mouth of the Loire (maybe in the Vannetais), lost on all three occasions and had to pay them to leave. It does appear, therefore, that he was unlikely involved in the region of Bayeux in the same period.

[1] The *Chronicle of Fontenelle* (*ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 80-81; trans. Coupland), says: 'At the same time [849] King Charles held a general assembly of the Franks in the city of Chartres'; whilst Prudentius in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (*AB* 849: ed. Grat, p. 58; trans. Nelson, p. 68) wrote that: 'In June at Chartres where King Charles was holding an assembly [...].' That this assembly took place at Auzainville (arr. Chartres, cant. Auneau, comm. Francourville) is established in a charter of Charles the Bald: *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, pp. 305-13. See also A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 264-65, 273.

[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 273-74; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, pp. 49-51.

[3] *ChrFont* 849: ed. Laporte, pp. 82-83: trans. Coupland.

[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 266, 273; J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine et la marche de Bretagne', in H. Atsma (ed.), *La Neustrie - Les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850*, *Beihefte der Francia*, 16.1 (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 29-127, at p. 73.

[5] *AB* 849: ed. Grat, p. 57; trans. Nelson, p. 68. It was also at this time that the Northmen attacked Périgueux (see the previous chapter). Later in 849, Prudentius (*AB* 849: ed. Grat, p. 58; trans. Nelson, p. 68) also reported that after Charles had gone back once again to Aquitaine: 'The Breton Nominoë ran amok with his usual insolence.' Although

ally Nominoë dates to about June 850, possibly in connection with the assembly held by Charles the Bald at Verberie in that month.[1] It was after Lambert's new defection that Charles quickly sent Count Amalric to replace him, and after this that Nominoë and Lambert had attacked and captured both Rennes and Nantes. The *Annals of Angoulême* tell us that when Nominoë and Lambert had captured Rennes and Nantes, Nominoë had partially destroyed both the towns' gates and walls.[2] Guillotel suggests this destruction was 'pour éviter un retour offensif de l'armée royale et la reconquête de ces villes',[3] a fact, he says, that indicates that the Breton army was not numerous enough to permit at the same time a permanent occupation of the cities and a continuation of his offensive in Neustria.[4] However, it is perhaps more likely that these breaches in Nantes' old Gallo-Roman walls were made to prevent any future revolt of the town against Nominoe's newly established authority.[5] It was also probably at this time, that is in 850 after Nominoë and Lambert had captured Nantes from Amalric, that the long absent Actard had finally been replaced by a Breton nominee called Gislard.[6]

The confrontations between the Charles's Franks and the Bretons continued, and following Nominoë's death in March 851[7] they culminated in August 851 in the stunning defeat of

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we do not know the precise reason why Nominoë 'rebelled' in 849 it certainly seems to be connected with a desire on the part of the Breton duke to control episcopal appointments in Brittany; see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 270-72; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 51. This whole so-called 'schism breton' rumbled on for many years, for which there is an extensive literature but see in the first instance J. M. H. Smith, 'The "archbishopric" of Dol and the ecclesiastical politics of ninth-century Brittany', *Studies in Church History*, 18 (1982), pp. 59-70.

[1] *ChrFont* 850: ed. Laporte, pp. 82-83; trans. Coupland: 'In the year 850 Charles held an assembly in the palace at Verberie in the month of June.' Charles issued charters at Verberie between 24 and 27 May 850, see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, pp. 335-48. Cf. also A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 274.

[2] *AAng s.a.* 850, p. 486.

[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 277. For this opinion see also L. Levillain, 'La Marche de Bretagne, ses marquis et ses comtes', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 58. 1 (1951), pp. 89-117, at pp. 106-7.

[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 277.

[5] N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, p. 270. For the same opinion see J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine', p. 74.

[6] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 267. For more detail on Actard's supposed long travails at the hands of both the Northmen and the Bretons see P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes'; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 809-10, n. 5. We do not know when Actard returned to Nantes, if he ever did at all. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 137, suggests he did so in about 852, after the reconciliation of Erispoë and Charles the Bald at Angers in late 851: 'Der vertriebene Erzbischof [*sic*] Attard von Nantes einigte sich mit Erispoë und kehrte auf seinem Sitz zurück', but this might be doubted. However, for what it is worth the *Chronicle of Nantes* (*La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 14, p. 44) does talk of Actard's return to Nantes sometime after the treaty of Angers. H. Guillotel (*ibid*., pp. 291-93, 306-7) suggests (without being specific) before the assembly at Louviers in February 856, and implies he might have been there in 854 when he was referred to in a charter as being the bishop 'à Nantes' *(ibid*., p. 307). As mentioned in an earlier note, P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes', p. 11, n. 10, just follows Guillotel in placing Actard's return to Nantes 'avant 856'.

[7] Immediately after reporting Nominoë's death the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* (*ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 84-85; trans. Coupland) says: 'But Lambert did not therefore revert to his former loyalty, but rather aroused the Bretons and attacked his own people, the land of his birth, although he was unsuccessful and suffered heavy losses among his own men and the Bretons.'

Charles's Frankish army by Erispoë's Bretons at Jengland-Beslé - close to the Breton monastery of Redon[1] - and the recognition of Erispoë's *de facto* position and future authority over the counties of Nantes, Rennes and the *pays de Retz*, which were referred to earlier.

In August 866 the Frankish bishops meeting at Soissons presented the situation of Actard, the absent bishop of Nantes, as being untenable,[2] and in October 867 in a letter addressed to Pope Nicholas I Charles described the state of the 'once very flourishing' town of Nantes as being 'now burned and totally destroyed' to the point where it had returned to being a 'desert' for the last ten years.[3] Given all this there can be no doubt that in 853 when the Northmen returned to Nantes it was Erispoë's town they burned, and whether or not there was a Breton garrison there is in no way an indication that Nantes had been completely abandoned at this time. However, there can be little doubt that the once flourishing town was already in a deplorable state in 853 and would remain so for some time to come. Lot was surely right to argue that there was no 'siege' of Nantes in 853, but just a siege of *Betia*.[4]

Lastly, in terms of the Northmen, whether Nantes had ever been able to recover much after the sack of 843 might be doubted because as we saw in the last chapter there were further attacks on both of the nearby monasteries of Noirmoutier and Déas in 846 and 847, and Nominoë had fought, and lost, three times against these Northmen at the same time, and he eventually had to resort to paying them a tribute to leave the area. But by 849, or early 850 at the latest, the Northmen had left both the Loire and Aquitaine, not to return until 852 when they reappear in Poitou before moving on to the Loire in June 853. It was precisely during this Scandinavian absence that Nominoë had managed to capture Nantes and Rennes and his son Erispoë had defeated the Franks at Jengland-Beslé and subsequently considerably extended his realm. In one sense, therefore, by being absent from the region during these years the Scandinavians had

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[1] It is very noticeable that Prudentius of Troyes completely ignored this important battle which involved a significant loss for the Franks.

[2] For details of this see P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings : Actard de Nantes', p. 10, n. 6, p. 11 and n. 11; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 810, n. 5. This is to be found in J. D. Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 15 (Venice, 1770), reprinted in Paris-Leipzig, 1902, col. 732-34. More recently see *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 860–874*, ed. W. Hartmann, *MGH*, *Concilia*, vol. 4 (Hanover, 1998), pp. 218-21, no. 23.

[3] Charles le Chauve, *Epistolae*, ed. J. P. Migne, *PL*, 124, col. 875; *Die Konzilien*, ed. W. Hartmann, p. 243: 'Actardum Namneticae quondam sedis venerabilem episcopum, exsilium, vincla [sic], mare, dura pericula passum, sed gratia Dei liberatum. Northmannis nimium Britonibusque vicinum, ac perinde civitate sibi commissa, olim florentissima, nunc exusta et funditus diruta, redacta per decennium cernitur in eremum […].' For which see also P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes', p. 11 and n. 11. Of course, if this 'ten years' is taken literally it does not take us back to 853, but at least it shows what a bad state Nantes had fallen into because of the attacks of the Northmen but also because of the acts of the Bretons.

[4] F. Lot, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes'.

inadvertently assisted the Bretons, allowing them to concentrate on defeating Frankish assaults and ultimately expand their territory.

Why had Oskar and Sidroc come?

Here I hope I may be excused for putting on my speculative hat. The problem with asking a question such as 'Why had Oskar and Sidroc come?' is that is has to do with intentions. But in the absence of any reliable contemporary evidence stating or even hinting at intentions we cannot really answer such a question. Historical novelists can weave a tale around a few known historical events and tell some ripping yarns but simple historians cannot. What we might be permitted to do, however, is imagine some hypothetical scenarios and see if there is any chronological or circumstantial evidence that might support them.

Firstly, it might be instructive to ask (although, to repeat, it may be unanswerable) why Oskar's Northmen having decided to leave the Seine then first returned to the watery and relatively poor area of Lower Poitou and then subsequently moved on the next year to the Loire.

Perhaps it was just because they knew the area well having previously established a base there from which they mounted their yearly raids in the second half of the 840s. But perhaps also the decision was connected with the chaotic situation unfolding in the area, which they would have known about and which might offer them some lucrative opportunities. After very briefly mentioning some of these events, Ferdinand Lot said that: 'La cité [Nantes] démantelée[1] devint une proie facile pour les Normands.'[2] Perhaps all there was to it was that Oskar, like many Scandinavian 'pirates' before and after him, was very well informed about internal Frankish struggles, fractures and weaknesses, and having made the decision to leave the Seine opted to go back to his former hunting ground to loot what he could. If so, it seems reasonable that he would have first returned to the area where he had previously been operating in, and where he had previously had a base on a 'certain island' in Aquitaine. Having arrived there in the second half of 852 and had a brief skirmish with Aquitanian magnates loyal to Charles the Bald at Brillac in watery Vendée, and made a couple of quick raids on the monasteries of Luçon and probably Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm, he then thought that the lower Loire would offer richer pickings. These Northmen would certainly have been aware that Nantes had only recently been granted to Erispoë and that this strategic town was in a ruined state and thus would pose no obstacle for them to make raids further up the Loire, which is precisely what they did.

[1] By Nominoë and his Bretons in 850, for which see above.
[2] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 691.

Here, however, we should briefly look at the continuing tensions between the Franks and the Bretons in the year 852.

It will be remembered that Charles had been humiliated and defeated by Erispoë's Bretons at the battle of Jengland-Beslé (near to Redon) on 22 August 851, and as a result of this defeat he had been compelled to make an agreement with Erispoë at a meeting held at Angers in September or October of the same year.[1] Charles had to grant him the counties of Rennes, Nantes and the *pays de Retz*, as well as the vestments and title of king, in return for which all Charles got was a promise of fidelity.[2] As Janet Nelson puts it, at Angers 'Charles extricated himself as best he could. If the Bretons could not be beaten, they must join him'.[3] Although Erispoë would turn out in future years to be loyal to Charles the king could not have seen into the future, and in 853 the humiliation he had suffered at Jengland-Beslé and the concessions wrung from him at Angers in 851 probably still rankled. That Charles was probably not at all happy with the concessions he had been forced to make to Erispoë including acknowledging him as a king[4] might also be suggested by the fact that only a few months after the agreement at Angers Charles had taken Erispoë's uterine cousin, but rival, Salomon, as his 'faithful man', and had bestowed 'a third of Brittany' on him,[5] which may have been be the very same lands he had just been forced to concede to Erispoë.[6] As Janet Nelson observes, 'Charles was evidently exploiting rivalry between the two'.[7] Hubert Guillotel thought Charles had wanted to introduce 'un germe de discorde entre les deux cousins', that is between Erispoë and Salomon.[8] Walther Vogel suggested that after the supposed *rapprochement* at Angers: 'Karl der Kahle suchte Erispoë hinfort auf anderen Wege beizukommen, in dem er Salomo (*sic*), einem mächtigen bretonischen Grossen, 852 zu seinem Vasallen gewann',[9] 'Charles the Bald henceforth attempted to deal with (or overcome) Erispoë in other ways, by gaining in 852

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[1] *AB* 851: ed. Grat, pp. 63-64; trans. Nelson, p. 73; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 283-84.
[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 284: 'L'ampleur des concessions royales était à la mesure de la défaite subie.'
[3] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 166.
[4] It would seem to me that Charles only recognised Erispoë as king of Brittany proper, the new concessions were granted to him in benefice. Referring to charters made at Louviers in 856, L. Levillain, 'La Marche de Bretagne, ses marquis et ses comtes', *Annales de Bretagne*, 58.1 (1951), pp. 89-117, at p. 108, n. 83, says regarding the concessions made at Angers, 'On voit alors qu'Erispoë n'est roi qu'en Bretagne bretonnante, « rex gentis Britannicae », et qu'il tient le comté de Nantes du roi de France en bénéfice.'
[5] *AB* 852: ed. Grat, p. 64; trans. Nelson, p. 74.
[6] See J. M. H. Smith, *Carolingian Brittany*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Oxford University, 1985), p. 108; L. Levillain, 'La Marche de Bretagne, ses marquis et ses comtes', p. 108; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 286: 'La surface de cette région qui reçut plus tard le nom de *nova Britannia*, de nouvelle Bretagne, correspondance à peu près à un tiers de l'ensemble du nouveau royaume.'
[7] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of Saint-Bertin*, p. 74, n. 5.
[8] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 286.
[9] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 137.

Salomon, a powerful Breton magnate, as his vassal.' But it was also in the spring of 852 when Erispoë's supporters Count Lambert and his brother Warner had finally been killed, 'one by a trick, the other after being sentenced to death'.[1] Levillain says: 'L'année 852 apporta sans doute au roi de France l'espoir de pouvoir revenir sur les concessions consenties à Angers. Le comte du Mans, Gauzbert, fils et successeur du comte Rorgon, mettait fin à l'aventureuse carrière de Lambert : déjà le frère de ce dernier, Garnier, était tombé entre ses mains, avait été conduit au roi mis en jugement, condamné à mort et exécuté, quand Lambert fut tué avec plusieurs des siens dans une embuscade que le comte avait dressée. La mort des deux frères qui privait le prince breton de précieux alliés parut-elle au roi Charles une occasion favorable de reprendre la lutte ? On le voit alors accueillir un chef breton, Salomon, cousin d'Erispoë, qui se fait son fidèle et à qui il donne un tiers de la Bretagne.'[2]

The deaths of Lambert and Warner, which had undoubtedly weakened Erispoë's position vis-à-vis the Franks, and the grant of a third of Brittany to Salomon happened at much the same time,[3] and in fact only a month or so before Oskar's fleet left the Seine to return to the South. Might there have been a connection?

There are differences amongst historians as to the timing, itinerary and even the leadership of the Northmen's attacks in the Seine region at this time.[4] However if we follow the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*,[5] after destroying the monastery of Saint-Wandrille at Fontenelle they then made an overland trip and 'burned down the city of Beauvais and the monastery of St Germer-de-Fly'. 'Soon after they had left St Germer, they were intercepted by a Frankish army as they were fording the river Epte at Vardes (comm. Neuf-Marché, Seine-Maritime). The Northmen suffered heavy casualties and only escaped by scattering through the woods, returning to their ships after nightfall. On 5 June they left the Seine.'[6]

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[1] *AB* 852: ed. Grat, p. 64; trans. Nelson, p. 74; *AAng* 852, p. 486, *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 88-89; trans. Coupland: 'At this time Lambert was slain by young Gauzbert, and his brother Warner was condemned to death at the King's command.' The 'at this time' here refers to the time Oskar was in northern Francia, between October 851 and early June 852 according to the Fontenelle monk. From the *Annals of Angoulême* we can date Lambert's killing to 1 May 852, and given that both the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* tell of the deaths of both brothers at the same time then Warner was probably killed by Count Gauzbert at much the same time, perhaps in April.

[2] L. Levillain, 'La Marche de Bretagne, ses marquis et ses comtes', p. 108.

[3] They follow each other in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*.

[4] Cf. for example F. Lot, 'Roric et ses incursions', pp. 684-85 and notes; *idem*, 'Études critiques sur l'abbaye de Saint-Wandrille', pp. xxx-xxxv; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 131-33; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 34-37.

[5] As do I, and as do Coupland and Vogel although with some differences regarding where Oskar's Northmen had been immediately before arriving on the Seine in 851.

[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 36-37.

Charles himself does not seem to have led the Frankish army at Vardes. Given this, and given the circumstances of the Northmen's withdrawal from the Seine, I believe it is unlikely that there was any agreement made, involving a payment or not, between Charles and Oskar which might have sent Oskar south to trouble Erispoë; a view that I think is supported by the fact that Oskar did not first go to Nantes but rather went to Poitou where he immediately fought at Brillac against Charles's own local magnates. While Oskar was in Poitou (until May 853), Count Gauzbert, who had killed Lambert the previous year, was himself executed in March,[1] 'beheaded on Charles's orders' according to Regino of Prüm.[2] It was Gauzbert's execution that was one of the primary reasons some Aquitanians called for the help of Louis the German, but that is another story.

Regarding Oskar and his Northmen, as has been shown they left Poitou for the Loire where they arrived at Nantes in June. Could Charles or his loyal Poitevin magnates have had anything to do with this move? To discomfort Erispoë as part of an attempt to grab back the territories he had recently been forced to concede? I doubt it. Léon Levillain states that 'les invasions normandes dans la vallée de la Loire, et l'insurrection des grands, dont la mise à mort du comte Gauzbert en 853 fut le prétexte et qui fit vaciller le trône même de Charles, obligèrent celui-ci non seulement à renoncer à une politique d'agression envers la Bretagne, mais encore à se rapprocher d'Erispoë et à resserrer son alliance avec lui'.[3] Actually at the time Oskar was moving to the Loire Charles had more to worry about than Erispoë's possession of Nantes, as Levillain says these included the consequences of Gauzbert's murder. The first call by the Aquitanians to Louis the German happened in 853,[4] in my opinion in the early summer.[5] But Charles had also only just got rid of Godfrid's and Sidroc's Northmen from the Seine - the latter not actually leaving until June or July. Additionally, in April an escape attempt by Pippin II from his captivity at Soissons had been foiled. Pippin had wanted to flee to Aquitaine,[6] which he managed to do the next year.

Thus, try as I might, I can find no evidence even of a circumstantial nature to suggest that Charles and Oskar had in any way colluded, either for the Northmen to leave the Seine or to move from Poitou to Nantes. Nevertheless, that various Carolingian kings and magnates in 853

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[1] *AAng* 853, p. 486.
[2] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon s.a.* 860 [recte 853]: ed. Kurze, p. 78; trans. MacLean, p. 136. The *Annals of Fulda* also say Charles had murdered Gauzbert: *AF* 854 (referring to earlier): ed. Kurze, p. 44; trans. Reuter, p. 35.
[3] L. Levillain, 'La Marche de Bretagne, ses marquis et ses comtes', pp. 108-9.
[4] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 67; trans. Nelson, p. 77; *AF* 853: ed. Kurze, pp. 43-44; trans. Reuter, p. 35.
[5] E. Goldberg, *Struggle for Empire*, p. 236, puts it in the 'summer of 853'; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 171, places it 'late in 853'.
[6] *AB* 853: ed. Grat, p. 66; trans. Nelson, p. 76.

could at least consider employing the Northmen, as they had done before and were to do again, is evidenced by the fact that the *Annals of Fulda* tell us that when the 'repeated requests' to Louis the German were made in 853 by the Aquitanians they had threatened that if Louis or his son did not come to save them from the 'tyranny' of Charles they 'should be forced to seek help from foreigners and enemies of the faith [that is from the Northmen] with danger to the Christian religion'.[1] At this time and in this geography these 'foreigners and enemies of the faith' can only have been Oskar's fleet.

Here we need to ask some similar questions about Sidroc. As far as I am aware one question that has never been asked by historians is this: When Sidroc arrived at Nantes in the late summer or autumn of 853 (if that is when we can date his arrival to), how was it that he had supposedly thought to send messengers to the Breton *princeps* Erispoë asking him to come and help him clear out Oskar's Northmen? It will be remembered that this fact is reported by a near contemporary Redon monk writing the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*. How could Sidroc possibly have believed that the Bretons would respond? As respond they apparently did.

Since the agreement made at Angers in late 851, following the battle of Jengland-Beslé in August of the same year, and until his murder in March 857 Erispoë was loyal to Charles the Bald. Why then in 853 would Erispoë have responded positively to this request from just another pagan chieftain? Indeed, from the very one who had been attacking Charles's heartland for the last year. Sidroc had left the Seine in (say) June 853, or possibly even slightly before according to Lot.[2] Yet before this his compatriot Godfrid had been bought off by Charles the Bald either by the payment of a tribute or perhaps less likely by a grant of territory. Neither Prudentius nor the monk of Fontenelle - our only two reliable sources - say anything of what Sidroc got in return for his withdrawal from the Seine. Lot saw Godfrid as being a 'chrétien, à demi-civilisé',[3] whereas Sidroc was the leader of bands of pagans.[4] But Lot also very reasonably suggested that there was 'sans doute un pacte avec Sidroc pour qu'il abandonnât la Seine, car une flotte de 105 navires quitta ce fleuve peu après, en juin au plus tard […] Nous allons la retrouver sur la Loire'.[5] In my opinion this must be correct. Godfrid had already been bought off; why should Sidroc have left without some sort of payment or promise of such if he undertook a service for Charles? In 853 perhaps Charles had promised or given Sidroc a payment (a *locarium,* a payment for mercenary services) to go to Nantes to help his new 'friend'

[1] *AF* 853: ed. Kurze, pp. 43-44; trans. Reuter, p. 35.
[2] F. Lot, 'Godfried et Sidroc sur la Seine', p. 689 and n. 17.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 688.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 689.

and theoretical vassal Erispoë clear out Oskar's Northmen from Nantes, who had themselves recently done so much damage along the Seine before arriving back in Aquitaine in the summer or autumn of 852, and who were now attacking along the Loire at Nantes and at the monastery of Saint-Florent? This is a possible scenario but, in my opinion, an unlikely one.

As has been outlined above, the situation following the treaty of Angers in late 851 was that Charles seems to have wanted to try to recover the territories wrung out of him, and in 853 had even seemingly granted the same territories to Erispoë's cousin and rival Salomon - who would eventually murder Erispoë in 857. Given this I find it impossible to believe that Charles had employed Sidroc to go to the aid of Erispoë. A slightly modified variant might be that Charles, who had probably very recently heard of Oskar's attack on Nantes and on the monastery of Saint-Florent, had employed Sidroc in the hope that he could clear the Northmen from Nantes and reclaim Frankish suzerainty on the lower Loire. This was certainly a strategy he employed a few years later on the Seine by paying the Somme-based Northman Weland to get rid of other Northmen established on the island of Oissel. If this had been the intention it certainly did not work because having besieged *Betia* Sidroc was supposedly paid off by Oskar's Northmen, entered into some sort of pact with him and then, according to the Redon monk, departed. When he finally reappeared on the Seine in August 856[1] he at once set to attacking Charles's realm again. Another alternative is that maybe Sidroc had been paid or offered money not only to leave the Seine alone but also with the express stipulation that he go to Nantes to discomfort Erispoë and the Bretons who had so recently humiliated him at the battle of Jengland-Beslé, as a consequence of which Charles had been forced to grant Erispoë the counties of Rennes, Nantes and the *pays de Retz*. But if that were the case then Charles would quickly have been sorely disabused because we know that almost the first thing Sidroc did when he arrived at Nantes was contact Erispoë and propose joining forces. That Charles might have employed Sidroc's Northmen in some form or other to go to the Loire is not an unreasonable idea but any assertion that he actually did so would just be speculation. Given the paucity of our sources what actually had induced Sidroc to come to the Loire in 853 and then, in league with the Bretons, fight another fleet of Northmen already established there can unfortunately probably never be known.

Finally, though, perhaps all the foregoing discussion and speculation is missing the point in searching for a reason why Charles the Bald might have employed Sidroc's fleet in the context

[1] Here I tend to prefer Prudentius's date to that of the monk of Fontenelle.

of his fights with the Bretons and/or as part of his ongoing attempt to gain control of the lower Loire and Aquitaine.

Whilst different Scandinavian chieftains were certainly willing from time to time to sell themselves as mercenaries to various Frankish and Breton rulers, they also had agendas of their own, indeed they had what historians call 'agency', a recent academically trendy word which just means that people have a mind of their own. The evidence we have would seem to suggest that throughout the ninth century in France (and elsewhere) the various Scandinavian fleets operating there were primarily and simply concerned with plunder, and certainly this was the case in the first half of the century. If Sidroc had been paid to leave the Seine in 853, as most historians who have thought about the subject would suggest he must have been, where might he go next?

The previous major Scandinavian incursion into southern England, which originated in Frisia, took place in late 850-851 and ended in a swift withdrawal after being defeated by the West Saxons at the battle of *Aclea*.[1] In addition, and as was discussed in the previous chapter, Oskar's fleet had earlier probably also made raids in southern England before moving on to Nantes in 843. But Sidroc did not go to England, he went as Prudentius rather indirectly tells us to the Loire, as confirmed by the *Gesta* of Redon. We have no information or indication that Sidroc was personally acquainted with or was in any way connected with Oskar although that he knew of his existence and his very recent activities on the Seine (and even perhaps further south) might be a reasonable assumption. But after over fifty years of Scandinavian raids on the Loire and in Aquitaine Sidroc would doubtless have been aware of the region and what it had to offer in terms of pillage, and like all good 'vikings' he would have been well informed about internal Frankish fractures and the opportunities these might throw up for his own profit. In any case it was to the Loire where he went, and, when he arrived at Nantes, he found Oskar's force already ensconced on the island of *Betia* and wanted to attack them, but perhaps because he did not deem his own rather large fleet was of sufficient size he called on Erispoë for help.[2]

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[1] *AB* 850: ed. Grat, pp. 59-60; trans. Nelson, p. 69; *ASC* A 851[=850]: ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 64. As was mentioned earlier they might well have then moved on to Ireland: see for example A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 71-72; S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 7-8, 23-24.

[2] It might be suggested that the fight at *Betia* was just a ruse or scam; that the fight between Sidroc and Oskar was a mere charade. The fact that Oskar's Northmen already established at *Betia* (if that is who they were) had supposedly paid Sidroc's fleet to leave but had also made peace (*pace*) with and entered into some type of alliance (*foederati*) with him might hint in this direction. The same might even be suggested for the later events on the Seine involving Weland and the Northmen encamped on the island of Oissel. F. Lot's interpretation does tend to go in this direction. Lot, it will be recalled (and see Appendix 1), had the Northmen on *Betia* (the 'Northmen of Aquitaine') joining with Sidroc's 'Northmen of the Seine' and then the combined fleet jointly being responsible for the raids in the area over the course of the next three years. But if we are to place any faith in the monk of Redon who wrote the *Gesta*, as I do here, then not only were there casualties on both sides during the naval

A new island base on the Loire

It was probably in the second half of 853, possibly while returning down the Loire after having attacked Tours in early November[1] but possibly also in the autumn before they attacked Tours, when Oskar's Northmen established a semi-permanent ship-base on the Île Batailleuse situated between Nantes and Angers and just opposite the monastery of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil (at Mont-Glonne) which they had attacked and burned in June.[2] They might have felt the earlier camp they had quickly erected on the island of *Betia* was 'too vulnerable to attack from the sea'.[3] Adrevald of Fleury tells us that these Northmen robbers 'established a place to station their ships on a certain island under the monastery of Saint-Florent. They erected huts there and made it like a *bourg* where they could keep the gangs of captives who they had chained up, and where they could rest their bodies after their exertions before starting another raid. From here they launched their surprise attacks, sometimes using their ships and sometimes on horseback, which devastated the whole region around'.[4]

No doubt starting from this new riverine island base in the summer of 854 the Northmen attacked and burned the stronghold of Blois and then rowed on towards Orléans. Prudentius says that 'their aim was to reach Orléans and wreak the same havoc there'.[5] However this time they were resisted by the local Franks: 'Bishop Agius of Orléans and Bishop Burchard of Chartres got ready their ships and warriors to resist them [the Northmen]; so the Danes gave up their plan and headed back to the lower waters of the Loire',[6] probably I would suggest to their new ship-base on the Île Batailleuse. This is one of quite a number of occasions when the

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engagement, but Sidroc had himself been injured. If Sidroc and Oskar had been running some sort of confidence trick it had badly misfired.

[1] A view held by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 42.

[2] Adrevald of Fleury places the establishment of this island base at around the time of the attack on Tours (November 853) and before the first (unsuccessful) attempt to take Orléans and the attack on Angers, both of which took place in 854. F. Lot puts its establishment 'vers 854' (cf. 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 693, n. 14), although he gets into a small muddle about this elsewhere (see 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 694, n. 17) by assuming that the Northmen who attacked Tours in November 853 had already established their base on this island near to Saint-Florent. Following Adrevald's chronology (see the reference below) would tend to support the idea that the base was first established before the attack on Tours.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 42.

[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 33, pp. 71-72, my translation. See also *Les miracles de saint Benoît: Miracula Sancti Benedicti*, eds. and trans. A. Davril, A. Dufour, and G. Labory (Paris, 2019), pp. 172-75. Davril translates this passage (at pp. 173, 175): 'Par la suite ils établirent un mouillage pour leurs bateaux, asile sûr contre tous les dangers, dans une île située au pied du monastère de Saint-Florent, ils y construisirent aussi des huttes, formant comme un bourg, ou ils gardaient des troupes de prisonniers enchaînés tandis qu'eux-mêmes s'y reposaient quelque temps, prêts à repartir sur le champ en expédition. C'est de là qu'ils lançaient des incursions imprévues, et se déplaçant tantôt en bateau, tantôt à cheval, ils ravagèrent toute la province à l'entour.'

[5] *AB* 854: ed. Grat, p. 69; trans. Nelson, p. 79.

[6] *Ibid.*

Northmen in France and elsewhere thought discretion the better part of valour and retreated when confronted by a powerful and determined force. However, the Franks had still been very worried because probably in late 853[1] Hilduin, the abbot of Saint-Martin of Tours, wrote to Abbot Lupus of Ferrières saying that he felt Orléans was an inadequate refuge for the treasure of Saint-Martin.[2] He asked Lupus if this treasure could be brought to the greater safety of Ferrières. Lupus refused Hilduin's request saying that his own monastery was itself in an exposed and dangerous situation and virtually bereft of defenders.[3] Understandably there was a general sense of insecurity along the Loire. At the very beginning of 854, before the burning of Blois and the Northmen's push towards Orléans, the monks of Saint-Philibert most of whom had been residing since very late 846 or very early 847[4] at the small monastery of Cunault - situated on the Loire just downstream of Saumur[5] - requested and received from Charles the Bald the grant of a small *cella* at Messais (dep. Vienne) in Poitou which they might use as a refuge from future possible attacks.[6] Although the monks did not move full-time to Messais until 862, taking the body of Saint Philibert with them.[7]

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[1] Maybe just after Tours had been burned? É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 173, n. 1, suggests perhaps Hilduin was 'surpris à l'improviste par l'arrivée des Normands'.

[2] We do not have Hilduin's letter only Lupus's reply, which can be dated to late 853 or early 854, see L. Levillain, 'Étude sur les lettres de Loup de Ferrières', pp. 326-27.

[3] Lupus of Ferrières, *Correspondance*, ed. Levillain, vol. 2, no. 90, pp. 90-92; L. Levillain, 'Étude sur les lettres de Loup de Ferrières', pp. 326-27: 'Elle est adressée à l'archichapelain Hilduin, ecclesiasticorum magistro, abbé de Saint-Martin de Tours. Loup ne s'étonne pas que Hilduin ait songé à lui confier, pour le mettre en sûreté, le trésor de son église, parce que Hilduin ne connaît pas le site de Ferrières ; si Hilduin l'avait connu, il n'aurait pu penser, non seulement à y envoyer ce trésor, mais même à l'y laisser trois jours. Quoique l'accès en paraisse difficile aux pirates, le peu de solidité du monastère et le petit nombre d'hommes capables de résister excitent l'avidité des brigands, surtout que ceux-ci peuvent s'approcher, cachés par les bois, sans se heurter à des fortifications ou à des troupes, qu'ils peuvent se réfugier dans les taillis voisins, s'emparer en toute sécurité des trésors et échapper facilement à qui les chercherait. Loup conseille à Hilduin de se procurer un autre refuge.' See also É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 173, n. 1.

[4] I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 39-40; L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 59 (1898), pp. 233-63, at p. 254. The monks of Saint-Philibert had been granted Cunault by Vivian Count of Tours on 27 December 845 and Vivian had himself received it from Charles the Bald on 19 October of the same year (cf. *RAC,* ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 81, pp. 227-29; no. 77, pp. 217-19, respectively). On 15 February 847 Charles the Bald gave the monks based at Déas additional lands in the vicinity of Cunault 'because they cannot remain in their monastery on account of the oppression of the cruel Northmen', cf. *RAC,* ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 91, p. 246. In the preface to the second book of the *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, p. 61; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 132, Ermentarius says that the body of Saint Philibert had remained at Déas even though the monastery had been burned by the Northmen (which happened on 29 March 847) and also that a group of monks were still at Déas - to watch over Saint Philibert's remains. All this implies that the monks had already moved to Cunault before the viking attack in March and probably before 15 February.

[5] Dep Maine-et-Loire, arr. Saumur, cant. Gemes.

[6] *RAC,* ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 159, pp. 416-26 (dated 19 January 854 at Orléans).

[7] Preface to the second book of the *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, p. 62; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 133.

Having seemingly been rebuffed while attempting to reach Orléans, the Northmen then took revenge at the end of the year by burning the *civitas* of Angers which was situated just upriver of their new island base.[1]

More attacks in Aquitaine and along the Loire, 855-857

Early the following year, 855, the Northmen left the Loire for a time and moved back into Aquitaine proper.

Prudentius reports that 'the Northmen attacked Bordeaux, a *civitas* in Aquitaine, and moved about all over the countryside at will'.[2] It is possible as Simon Coupland suggests[3] that it was during this 'moving around' the countryside at will that the churches of Condom and Vic-Frezensac were destroyed (both of which are in Gers in southern Aquitaine, or perhaps better said in Gascony) although other dates could be proposed.[4]

That this second attack on Bordeaux was undertaken by Oskar is made almost certain by the statement of the Fontenelle monk that when he left the Seine he and his men 'went back to Bordeaux on laden ships'.[5] The monk of Fontentelle who wrote this chronicle probably got his information about events in Aquitaine from the abbot of Fontenelle Herbert who had accompanied Charles the Bald during his expedition into Aquitaine and who had played a conspicuous part during the successful siege and capture of Pippin II's stronghold of Toulouse in September 849.[6]

The Northmen returned to the Loire later in 855, probably in October or November. Prudentius wrote: 'The Northmen sailed up the Loire. They left their ships and tried to reach Poitiers on foot (*pedestri itinere*). But the Aquitanians came up to meet them and beat them so soundly that hardly more than 300 of them escaped.'[7] The 'Aquitanians' who inflicted this defeat on the Northmen most likely included the forces of the count of Poitiers who was probably still Ramnulf (I) who

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[1] The *Annals of Saint-Bertin* say they 'came up the Loire' to Angers (cf. *AB* 854: Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80). See also the preface to the second book of the *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, *ibid*.

[2] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80. It should be noted that Prudentius does not say Bordeaux was captured although this is often assumed by historians, probably incorrectly in my view.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 43.

[4] For Condom see *Historia abbatiae Condomensis*, ed. L. d'Achery, in *Spicilegium, sive collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum*, revised by E. Martène, S. Baluze and L. F. J. de la Barre, 3 vols (Paris, 1723), vol. 2, p. 581. For Vic-Fezensac, see *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), pp. 1090-1092, at p. 1091), (Paris, 1863), pp. 726-728, at p. 727. This dating seems a more likely occasion for the raids than 848, as W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 98, believed.

[5] *ChrFont s.a.* 852: ed. Laporte, p. 87; trans. Coupland.

[6] See *ChrFont s.a.* 849: ed. Laporte, pp. 80-83.

[7] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 71; trans. Nelson, p. 81. See also *Chronique de Saint-Maixent*, ed. Verdon, 855: p. 60. If Oskar had still been the main leader of the fleet and army that attacked Bordeaux in 855, which as suggested is quite likely, then it is possible he was killed during the Northmen's important and significant defeat while attempting to pillage Poitiers in 854, although there is no evidence for this. We simply do not know where, when and how Oskar died.

had already fought the same Northmen at Brillac in November 852 after their return from the Seine.[1] It is almost certain that the count of Poitiers (whether Ramnulf or not) had been one of the Aquitanians who had attended the coronation as king of Aquitaine of Charles the Bald's young son Charles the Younger at Limoges in mid-October 855.[2] After which, at least according to Ademar, the young Charles then returned to Francia.[3] Alfred Richard speculated that it was the troops of Charles the Younger[4] who had 'stopped the pirates a mile from the town' of Poitiers and inflicted 'a complete defeat' on them.[5] Of course Charles was only about seven or eight years old at this time and it could be suggested that if he had been involved in the defeat of the Northmen threatening Poitiers then Prudentius might have mentioned it. Nevertheless, it is certainly conceivable that Charles had been accompanied by the count of Poitiers on his way back to Francia and thus might have been with the 'Aquitanians' who had won this significant victory.

In the spring of 856 Orléans on the Loire was once again the target: 'On 18 April, Danish pirates came to Orléans, sacked it and went away without meeting any resistance (*inpune*).'[6] Adrevald of Fleury also tells of this first attack. The Northmen 'remontant le cours supérieur de la Loire avec leurs bateaux, ils parviennent à Orléans et après avoir pris la ville, ils s'emparent de l'or [actually *auro distrahunt*], sous l'épiscopat d'*Agius*'.[7] Coupland suggests that Adrevald's references to the raid are somewhat difficult to interpret but seem to indicate that Orléans was ransomed, probably by Bishop Agius who was in command of the town,[8] but only after it had first been captured.[9] This is quite convincing, but according to Lot: 'La cité fut pillée et les pirates

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[1] Although, similar to two years later when Poitiers was actually captured by Pippin II and his Scandinavian allies, as J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 84, n. 4, says, 'conjectures about the countship (of Poitiers) based on Ademar should be resisted'. For more such scepticism see J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes'. Certainly the bishop of Poitiers, Ebroin, who was a very staunch supporter of Charles the Bald's cause, could not have been involved because he was already dead, killed according to L. Levillain by rebellious/separatist Poitevins on 18 April 854; see L. Levillain, 'L'archichapelain Ebroin, évêque de Poitiers', *Le Moyen Âge*, 34 (1923), pp. 177-222, at p. 214, or according to Otto Oexle on 18 April 851 or 852: O. G. Oexle, 'Bischof Ebroin von Poitiers und seine Verwandten', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 3 (1969), pp. 138-210, at pp. 191-92.

[2] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 71; trans. Nelson, p. 81.

[3] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 19, p. 217.

[4] Sometimes called Charles 'the Child'.

[5] A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, p. 14, my translation.

[6] *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 72; trans. Nelson, p. 82.

[7] *Les miracles de saint Benoît : Miracula Sancti Benedicti*, eds. and trans. Davril *et al*, pp. 174-75. Davril *et al* (p. 174, n. 187) wrongly in my view place this report in 854 and say that it contradicts Prudentius's report and 'Il n'y est pas question d'or (854)'.

[8] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 43-44. Agius was consecrated in 843 and died in 867.

[9] Coupland's argument (*ibid*., p. 43) is as follows: 'In one instance Adrevald referred to the "prima vaststatione ... urbis" [this is in Adrevald's chap. 34], which is consistent with Prudentius's statement that Orléans was looted ("praedantur") [...]. However, Adrevald also stated that the Northmen "Aurelianis perveniunt captamque urbem auro distrahunt" [in chap. 33 as referenced above], and later reported that the town was "distracta" [in chap. 36]. *Distrahere* does not mean to plunder, but to sell, and it would be difficult to make sense of "auro" if "distrahunt" signified plundered.' This is a view once proposed by J. Steenstrup.

redescendirent le fleuve.'[1] Lot argued that Adrevald's term 'captamque urbem auro distrahunt' does not mean that Orléans was ransomed.[2] He points out that it is in fact the chronicler of Nantes who reworked Adrevald's report and said that the people of Orléans had given the Northmen *grandes pecunes* which delivered them and their city,[3] adding that 'l'auteur de la *Chronique de Nantes* a compris que la cité fut rachetée à prix d'or, que les habitants donnèrent de "grandes pécunes"'.[4] But overall I tend to agree with Coupland: this time Orléans was likely ransomed with gold after it had been taken.

Even though the Northmen had suffered a serious reverse trying to reach Poitiers at the end of the previous year the monks of Saint-Philibert, mostly based at Cunault on the Loire, were obviously afraid that their residence would soon prove to be a new target and/or that their existing refuge at Messais, which was actually in Poitou quite near to Poitiers, may also not be safe because on 10 February 856 at a meeting between the Breton Erispoë and Charles the Bald at Louviers (dep. Eure, in the *pagus* of Rouen)[5] at Erispoë's request the community of Saint-Philibert had been granted a small monastery at *Bussogilum* - now Saint-Jean-sur-Mayenne (dep. Mayenne) in the county of Le Mans - to which they could retreat if threatened by the incursions of the Northmen.[6] Léon Maître wrongly dated this charter to 854, the same date as the grant of the *cella* at Messais.[7] Maître even added that for the community 'leur vie se passait en allées et venues de Cunauld à Messay ou à *Bussogilum*; toutes les fois que les Bretons ou les Normands remontaient la Loire, ils s'enfuyaient tantôt vers le Nord, tantôt vers le Sud'.[8] But as Lot observed it is unlikely that the monks ever used *Bussogilum* as a refuge,[9] and in 862 the community all moved to Messais. Of course, when the Northmen attacked Orléans in the spring of 856 they would have had to pass the monastery at Cunault but whether the community had fled at this time or had bought protection from the Northmen is not known.

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[1] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 702
[2] F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', *Annales de Bretagne*, 22.3, p. 421; *idem*, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 702, n. 69
[3] Cf. *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, p. 86.
[4] F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', p. 412,
[5] *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 72; trans. Nelson, p. 81. It was at this meeting that Erispoë's daughter was betrothed to Charles's son Louis (later called 'the Stammerer').
[6] For the identification/localisation of *Bussogilum*, see A. Longnon, *Pouillés de la province de Tours* (Paris, 1903), p. 52, n. 2; L. Maître, 'Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', pp. 254-55. For the date of the charter and the location of *Vetus Domus* as being Louviers in the department of Eure see *inter alia* F. Lot, 'Mélanges carolingiennes. I. Veteres Domus', *Le Moyen Âge*, 17 (1904), pp. 465-77 (reprinted in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2, pp. 522-34); A. Giry, 'Sur la date de deux diplômes de l'église de Nantes et de l'alliance de Charles le Chauve avec Erispoé', *Annales de Bretagne*, 13 (1897-98), pp. 485-508; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 292.
[7] L. Maître, ' Cunauld, son prieuré et ses archives', p. 254 and n. 3.
[8] *Ibid*., p. 154.
[9] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 702, n. 68.

In early 857 Prudentius says that 'those pirates who were based in the region of the lower Loire', hence those who had been active there since 853, 'sacked Tours and all the surrounding districts as far as the stronghold of Blois'.[1]

A little later in the same year[2] Prudentius tells us that Pippin II joined forces with 'Danish pirates', 'Pippinus Danorum pyratis sociatur', and 'sacked Poitiers and ravaged many other places in Aquitaine', 'et multa alia Aquitaniae loca'.[3]

These many other places in Aquitaine that the Northmen were ravaging in the first half of 857 were quite possibly in the county of Herbauge, formerly a part of Poitou.[4] It could be that these ravages had been the final straw for the few monks of Saint-Philibert who had remained at Déas after the main community had left for Cunault. It was likely at this time, either in 857 or 858, that they had finally managed to retrieve the body of Philibert from Déas and taken it to Cunault.[5] As Lot put it: 'Cette translation tendrait à faire supposer que si le Poitou et l'Herbauge furent la proie des pirates au début du 857, par contre la Loire, en amont des Ponts-de-Cé, en fut delivrée.'[6] Although whether these ravages really took place in 'early' 857 or before or after the second attack on Poitiers in the early summer is not evident.

This is the first time we hear of Pippin II joining with the Northmen, a thing as far as we know he would not do again until 864 when he tried to retake Toulouse. But Poitiers in Aquitaine was clearly being held against Pippin by 'Aquitanians' loyal to Charles the Bald and his young son Charles the Younger[7] who had been crowned and anointed as king of Aquitaine at Limoges in mid-October 855.[8]

Pippin II will be discussed more in subsequent chapters, but were these 'Danish pirates' who joined forces with Pippin in the summer of 857 the same as those who had been operating on the Loire earlier in the same year? I suggest they must have been. As was the case in the 840s all the

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[1] *AB* 857: ed. Grat, p. 74; trans. Nelson, pp. 83-84. They had probably left the area by May 857; see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 155 and n. 4.
[2] From where this entry in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* is placed it might indicate after July 857, but I would suggest most certainly after May.
[3] *AB* 857: ed. Grat, p. 74; trans. Nelson, p. 84.
[4] See F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 703, n. 77.
[5] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 702, n. 67, p. 703, n. 77, suggests 857. A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des* rois, p. 339, and N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, p. 272, opt for 858. As noted earlier, when the community had left for Cunault they had left the body of Saint Philibert behind and only now (857 or 858) did they manage to take it to Cunault by stealth from under the noses of the 'Northmen nearby'. In the intervening years a few devoted monks had stayed behind at Déas with Saint Philibert's bones in the hope, says Ermentarius, that one day all the community would be able to return. It was only when all such hope of a return had disappeared that the community secretly managed to remove the bones and take them to Cunault: see Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, p. 61; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, pp. 132-32. That there were Northmen in the vicinity when this was done would tend to favour a date of 857 rather than 858.
[6] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 703, n. 77.
[7] J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 84, n. 4.
[8] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, pp. 70-71; trans. Nelson, pp. 80-81.

Scandinavian raids on the Loire and in Aquitaine between late 852 and 857 seem to have been conducted by one fleet,[1] whether or not contingents of this fleet sometimes split off to make a particular attack, which is possible. In terms of chronology, during the whole period in question the Scandinavian attacks on the Loire and further south in Aquitaine completely mesh and never once overlap. When there were attacks along the Loire (from June 853 through to the end of 854, and again from late 855 until early 857) there were none in Aquitaine, and when Aquitaine south of the Loire was the target (such as in late 852 to May 853, in the summer of 855 at Bordeaux, and in the summer of 857 in Poitou) there is no recorded Scandinavian activity along the valley of the Loire.

Whatever the case may have been, 857 is the last time Northmen were operating on the Loire and in Aquitaine until they returned to the area in 862 - some coming back from Spain and some from the Seine. Where had they been? The general scholarly consensus is as Simon Coupland puts it that 'the Vikings almost certainly left the region [the Loire and Aquitaine] soon afterwards, heading for northern Spain, which they reached in July 858',[2] an expedition which will be very briefly examined below.

In summary, in this chapter the 'facts' of the Scandinavians' activities on the Loire, in Aquitaine and even in south-eastern Brittany during the 850s have been analysed, reconstructed and interpreted as best I am able given the sources we have. Furthermore, an interpretation regarding both the chronology of these events and who from the Scandinavian side was involved has been proposed.

One thing it would be most worthwhile doing in the future is to explore the geopolitical context in France in general, and most specifically in Aquitaine, in these years. In what ways or not were all these raids connected with the struggles between Charles the Bald, the Bretons and the Aquitanian magnates, not to forget also with Charles's half-brother Louis the German, during this momentous decade?

One other aspect well worth highlighting is that in the 840s with the exception of the sack of Nantes in 843 and the three fights between the Northmen and Nominoë's Bretons in 846-847 all the Scandinavian attacks in southern Aquitaine were aimed at towns, monasteries and churches which were probably still controlled even if only nominally and tenuously by Pippin II of Aquitaine, and it was these attacks that precipitated Pippin's first downfall in 848. As Janet Nelson puts it, 'as for Aquitaine, it seems clear that the Vikings' impact [in the 840s] played a

[1] With the exception of Sidroc's short incursion at *Betia* of course.
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 45. See also F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 703; *idem*, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 712; A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 47- 64.

crucial role in the collapse of Pippin II's regime'.[1] However, by the 850s when the same Scandinavian fleet returned Pippin's position was much weaker. Not only had he been a captive of Charles the Bald from 852 to 854 but during the whole decade his control of, or authority over, the Aquitanian areas the Northmen were attacking had been lost to him. Thus, even though it seems that the same Scandinavian fleet was involved in both decades the attacks of this fleet in the 850s were now, whether intentionally or not, directed at places loyal to Pippin's uncle and resolute enemy Charles the Bald. And all these raids in the south were happening at the same time as Charles was having to contend with other raids led by Sidroc and Bjørn on the Seine and with the invasion of Aquitaine by Louis the German's son Louis the Younger in 854 culminating in 858 with Louis the German's attempt to take over all of Charles's kingdom.

The second expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean

The second Scandinavian expedition to the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean has been extensively examined by many previous historians and I will not repeat all the details and debates here.[2] Perhaps the best modern assessment, at least in English, has been provided by Ann Christys in her recent thorough book *Vikings in the South*.[3] I refer readers to her work which uses all the available Christian and Muslim sources.[4]

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[1] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 154.

[2] For earlier works which include mentions and/or appraisals of this second expedition I would refer in particular to A. Melvinger, *Les premières incursions des Vikings en Occident d'après les sources arabes* (Uppsala, 1955); J. Stefánsson, 'The Vikings in Spain. From Arabic (Moorish) and Spanish Sources', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 6 (1908-1909), pp. 31-46. R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', in *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne pendant le moyen age*, vol. II (Leiden, 1860), pp. 271-390; *idem*, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne : jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides (711-1110)*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 1861). Treatments by Iberian historians of differing quality include: H. Pires, 'Money for Freedom, Ransom Paying to Vikings in Western Iberia', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 7 (2011), pp. 125-30; *idem*, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*; *idem*, 'Viking Attacks in Western Iberia: An Overview', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 9 (2013), pp. 155-72; *idem*, *Vikings em Portugal e na Galiza: As incursões nórdicas medievais no ocidente ibérico* (Sintra, 2017); J. S. Izquierdo Díaz, *Os Vikingos en Galicia* (Santiago de Compostella, 2009); E. Morales Romero, *Os viquingos en Galicia* (Santiago, 1997); *idem*, *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la Peninsula Ibérica en los los siglos IX-XI* 2nd edn (Madrid, 2006); V. Almazán, *Gallaecia scandinavica: introducción ó estudio das relacións galaico-escandinavas durante a Idade Media* (Vigo, 1986), although there are many other studies some of which I will refer to later in this work. Also of interest in this regard are N. S. Price, 'The Vikings in Spain, North Africa and the Mediterranean', pp. 462-69; S. M. Pons-Sanz, 'The Basque country and the Vikings during the ninth century'; C. Mazzoli-Guintard, 'Les Normands dans le Sud de la péninsule Ibérique au milieu du IXe siècle'. Finally, I would mention V. E. Aguirre, *The Viking expeditions to Spain during the 9th century*, *Mindre Skrifter*, 30 (Odense, 2013), esp. pp. 59-69. Aguirre offers some interesting interpretations, although several I cannot agree with.

[3] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 47-64.

[4] See also A. Christys, 'The Vikings in the south through Arab eyes', in W. Pohl, C. Gantner, and R. Payne (eds.), *Visions of Community in the post-Roman World* (Ashgate, 2012), pp. 447-57.

To cut a very long story short, the Northmen seem to have arrived in Galicia in July 858,[1] after which they raided down the Atlantic coast and attacked Lisbon before heading for Seville and making attacks in al-Andalus. They then made an incursion into North Africa before returning to the eastern Iberian coast and making attacks there, including on the Balearic Islands. They then reached Frankish waters and wintered in the Camargue. In 860 they made raids up the Rhône reaching Nîmes and Arles before being defeated at Valence. Thereafter they moved on to Italy where they took Pisa and sacked other *civitates*. It is possible that on returning from Italy they once again wintered in the Camargue[2] before setting off back to the Atlantic coast in 861 where they next reappear in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* in early 862 in southern Brittany.[3]

Our concern in this work is with connections and particularly with Aquitanian connections. Thus, where had the fleets or fleets which undertook this second expedition to Iberia and into the Mediterranean originated from? What we know about the Northmen operating on the Loire, in Aquitaine and even in south-eastern Brittany during the 850s was highlighted above. The last recorded activity in this region was in the summer of 857 when Pippin II of Aquitaine joined the Northmen for an attack on Poitiers. It was not until early 862 that two groups of Northmen returned to the area, one coming from the Seine and another having just returned from Spain. The activities of these two groups in subsequent years will be analysed in the following chapters.

In my opinion it was the Northmen who had operating in Aquitaine in these years, and who were essentially the same fleet as Oskar's, whether they were now still under his leadership or after an unreported death under new leadership, who conducted this second expedition. This is also the view of a number of previous historians. For example Ferdinand Lot said that these Northmen brusquely abandoned the Loire in the spring or summer of 857 and, 'Ils prennent une direction opposée à celle de Sidroc et gagnent l'Espagne, puis la Méditerranée, enfin le Bassin du Rhône où nous allons bientôt les retrouver'.[4] Following Lot, more recently Simon Coupland

[1] The idea of their arrival in Iberia in July 858 comes from the continuator of the *Chronicle of Asturias*; for which see in the first place A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 47.
[2] See S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 55; A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 64.
[3] There are still a number of debated issues regarding this expedition particularly in respect to the precise chronology of all these movements.
[4] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 703; *idem*, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 712. Lot planned a Chapter IX called 'Les normands dans le Rhône et la Méditerranée' which was unfortunately never written.

states that 'The fleet which had been on the Loire left the region and in July 858 reached northern Spain'.[1]

Based essentially on Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story of *Alstignus* (Hasting)[2] leading this expedition,[3] and on William of Jumièges's addition of his supposed foster-son *Bier Costae Ferree* (Bjørn Ironside) in his *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*,[4] historians far too numerable to mention have a little too gullibly accepted these stories in one form or another.[5] The activities of the historical Alsting/Hasting are discussed more in subsequent chapters, but in regard to Dudo's composite and legendary *Alstignus* it is unlikely that he led this expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean from 858 to 861.[6]

On the other hand it is not impossible that the historical chieftain Bjørn (*Berno*) operating on the Seine from the autumn of 856, and who disappears from there in about April 858,[7] could actually have joined in this expedition.[8] Regarding this possibility it is not really necessary to set up any strict either/or, that is that either these Northmen originated on the Loire/in Aquitaine or

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[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 49, and p. 45: Following the attack on Poitiers and many other Aquitanian places in 857 'the Vikings almost certainly left the region [the Loire and Aquitaine] soon afterwards, heading for Spain and the Mediterranean.'

[2] Earlier manuscripts have the spellings Antignus, Astignus and Anstumus. The C scribe's Alstignus is probably influenced by the spelling Alsting(us) in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* [hereafter *AV*] *s.a.* 882 and 890; see E. Christiansen, trans. *Dudo of Saint-Quentin. History of the Normans* (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 183, n. 76.

[3] *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum auctore Dudone sancti Quintini decano Dudonis Sancti Quintini*, ed. J. Lair, *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Normandie*, 23 (Caen, 1865), book 1, pp. 132-35; *Dudo of Saint-Quentin. History of the Normans*, trans. E. Christiansen, pp. 17-20. Hereafter 'Dudo'.

[4] William of Jumièges, *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Torigni*, ed. and trans., E. M. C. van Houts, 2 vols (Oxford, 1992-1995), I.1, pp. 10-11.

[5] William of Jumièges makes *Bier Costae Ferree* a son of a King Lothbroc, who has been invariably made (rightly or wrongly) to be the later legendary figure Ragnarr Loðbrók. The historiographical literature on Alsting/Hasting, Bjørn Ironside and Ragnarr Loðbrók is vast and I cannot explore it further here, but see in the first instance: E. A. Rowe, *Vikings in the West: The Legend of Ragnarr Loðbrók and his sons*; R. McTurk, *Studies in Ragnars saga loðbrókar and its Major Scandinavian Analogues*, *Medium Aevum Monographs*, 15 (Oxford 1991); *idem*, 'Ragnarr Loðbrók in the Irish Annals', in B. Almqvist and D. Green (eds.), *Proceedings of the Seventh Viking Congress, Dublin 15-21 August 1973*, *Viking Society for Northern Research* (London 1976), pp. 93-123; *idem*, 'Kings and kingship in Viking Northumbria', in J. S. McKinnell *et al* (eds.), *The Fantastic in Old Norse Icelandic Literature*, *Preprint Papers of the 13th International Saga Conference*, *Durham and York, 6th-12th August 2006* (Durham 2006), pp. 681-88; *idem*, 'Male or Female initiation. The Strange Case of *Ragnars Saga*', in P. Hermann, J. P. Schjødt, and R. T. Kristensen (eds.), *Reflections of Old Norse Myths*, *Studies in Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 1 (Turnhout 2007), pp. 53-74; *idem*, 'Review of Elizabeth Ashman Rowe's Vikings in the West: The Legend of Ragnar Lodbrok and his sons', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 37 (London, 2013), pp. 94-99; F. Amory, 'The Viking Hasting in Franco-Scandinavian Legend', in M. H. King and W. M. Stevens (eds.), *Saints, Scholars and Heroes. Studies in Honour of Charles W. Jones*, 2 vols (Collegeville, 1979), vol. 2, pp. 265-86; J. de Vries, 'Die historischen Grundlagen der Ragnars-saga loðbrókar', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi*, 39 (1923), pp. 244-74; *idem*, 'Om betydningen av Three Fragments of Irish Annals for vikingetidens historie', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 5.5 (1924) pp. 509-32; *idem*, 'Die ostnordische Überlieferung der Sage von Ragnar Lodbrók', *Acta Philologica Scandinavica*, 2 (1927), pp. 115-49; *idem*, 'Die Entwicklung der Sage von den Lodbrokssöhne in den historische Quellen', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi*, 44 (1928), pp. 117- 63. All these works contain many useful references to other literature on the same subject.

[6] See in the first instance H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin et son histoire des premiers ducs normands* (Paris, 1916), pp. 53-57 and F. Amory, 'The Viking Hasting'.

[7] For whom see Chapter 5.

[8] Cf. A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 61.

that they came (under Bjørn?) from the Seine as for instance Walther Vogel did by stating: 'The trip', to Iberia and the Mediterranean, 'originated in any case from the Seine', 'Die Fahrt ging jedenfalls von der Seine aus.'[1] It is at least conceivable that after leaving the Seine Bjørn had then gone to Iberia; indeed in Hélio Pires's view there were probably two different fleets, one arriving in 858 and another in 859,[2] although I am not yet completely convinced by this.[3]

Another idea derives from a story contained in the late compilation nowadays usually called the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* about two unnamed sons of a Scandinavian chieftain called Ragnall going to Spain.[4] This Ragnall has often been quite erroneously transformed into a *Ragnarr* and hence into both the historical *Reginheri* who attacked Paris in 845 and also thereby into the legendary Ragnarr Loðbrók.[5] As I hope to show in a future essay, partially now written and provisionally entitled 'Barking up the wrong tree: The story of Ragnall and his sons in the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*', this story has decidedly nothing to do with the expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean in 858 to 861 or indeed with any sons of the historical Reginheri or even the legendary Ragnarr Loðbrók.[6] In fact the Ragnall story bears many hallmarks of having originally been composed/written in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries in an Orcadian/Norwegian/Icelandic milieu which produced for example the *Orkneyinga Saga*, a milieu that included the by now bilingual Hiberno-Norse in Ireland. It also shows some Norman and Anglo-Norman borrowings as indeed do many of the later Norse sagas and in particular a borrowing from Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story of the raids in Spain in the late 960s to early 970s.

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 172, my translation. He adds that: 'Da die normannische Tradition Bjœrn Eisenseite und seinen Pflegevater (?) Hasting als Führer nennt', 'As the Norman tradition names Bjørn Ironside and his foster-father (?) Hasting as leaders', making reference here to William of Jumièges's *GND*, based in the case of 'Hasting' on Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *De moribus* but using Regino of Prüm's spelling.

[2] H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147*, pp. 111-19; *idem*, 'Viking Attacks in Western Iberia', pp 160-61.

[3] V. E. Aguirre, *The Viking expeditions to Spain*, pp. 59-69, argues against two arrivals in consecutive years, but does have the fleet in the Mediterranean splitting in 859 (p. 59), with one part returning 'to Noirmoutier' no less! This early return is to make a place for the supposed attack on Pamplona which he (following others) places in 859 (see pp. 66-69), an issue I touch upon later but do not explore in any detail. In any case there is no evidence that any Northmen returned to Noirmoutier in 859, from the Mediterranean or anywhere else.

[4] *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*, ed. and trans. J. N. Radner (Dublin, 1978) [hereafter *FAI*], § 330, pp. 118-21.

[5] See most particularly A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian Kings in the British Isles 850-880* (Oxford, 1977), esp. pp. 62-67; but several other scholars have suggested the same thing.

[6] Amongst others Rory McTurk has shown the incoherence of this construct; see R. McTurk, 'Ragnarr Loðbrók in the Irish Annals'. A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 57, concludes her examination of this matter by saying: 'The story of Ragnall and his sons in the *Fragmentary Annals* is unlikely to have much evidential value for Scandinavians in the South.'

Chapter 5

THE SEINE, THE SOMME AND ENGLAND: 856-862

During the 860s the incursions of the Northmen into Aquitaine reached their zenith. Their raids pushed much further inland than they had hitherto done, indeed they reached as far as Clermont in the Auvergne, plus, although for a second time, they went to Toulouse. The Northmen responsible had certainly not as Ferdinand Lot would have it just appeared out of thin air, 'venue on ne sait d'où'.[1] They had a history, a history that had involved Spain, Brittany, the Loire, Francia, England and Flanders, and probably Frisia as well. Thus, because we are primarily concerned with connections, before exploring these years in Aquitaine in the subsequent two chapters we are obliged to start by going back to the Seine and the Somme and to the year 856.

New arrivals on the Seine

The *Chronicle of Fontenelle* tells us that: 'In the year 855 [actually probably in 856], the fourth Indiction,[2] a very large fleet of Danes entered the river Seine on 18 July, led by the same Sidroc,[3] and quickly came as far as the castle at Pîtres, which used to be called Petremamalum.[4] Then, after thirty-three days, that is on 19 August, the Northman Bjørn [*Berno*] arrived with a substantial fleet. They then joined forces and wreaked great devastation and destruction as far as the forest of le Perche, where King Charles opposed them with the army, and cut them down with great slaughter.'[5] Prudentius of Troyes tells us: 'In mid-August [of 856], other Danish pirates again sailed up the Seine. They ravaged and plundered the *civitates*, monasteries and *villae* on both banks of the river, and even some *civitates* further away. They then chose a place on the bank of the Seine called Jeufosse, an excellent defensive site for a base, and they quietly passed the winter.'[6] 'The combined Scandinavian force then ravaged and plundered on both

[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 482, n. 2, reprinted in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2, p. 790, n. 2.
[2] The fourth indiction was 856. The dating of this arrival to 856 rather than to 855 was mentioned in the previous chapter. J. Laporte, *ChrFont*, pp. 88-89, nn. w and x, corrects indiction 4 to indiction 3, thus preferring the date 855.
[3] It will be remembered that Sidroc had previously been on the Seine in 852-53.
[4] According to S. Coupland (trans.), 'The Annals of Fontanelle' [Coupland's spelling], n. 85, '*Petremamulum* is probably to be identified with the Roman Petromantalum, which was situated in the commune of St Gervais, near Magny-en-Vexin (Val-d'Oise), nearly 45 km from Pîtres'.
[5] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 89; trans. Coupland.
[6] *AB* 856: ed. Grat, pp. 72-73; trans. Nelson, pp. 82-83. In what immediately follows regarding the north of France I owe a particular debt to the relevant parts of Simon Coupland's 1987 doctoral thesis *Charles the Bald and the*

sides of the river.'[1] The 'great slaughter' of the Northmen in *le Perche* referred to in the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* probably happened in October after Charles had collected his forces at Chartres on 10 October,[2] interestingly just after Charles's twelve-year-old daughter Judith had married the fifty-year-old West Saxon king Æthelwulf at Verberie on 1 October,[3] a political marriage that is usually seen as being in part another attempt to counter Scandinavian incursions.[4] It is, however, rather odd that Prudentius makes no mention of such a victory, preferring here to concentrate on the Northmen's ravaging and plundering and their passing the winter quietly on Jeufosse.[5] According to Simon Coupland despite Charles's 'resounding victory' in the forest of Perche 'this defeat represented no more than a temporary setback for the Northmen, who once again wintered on an island near Jeufosse and continued their raids in the Seine basin'.[6] Certainly on 28 December 856 the Northmen 'attacked Paris and burned it'.[7] According to the chronicler of Fontenelle 'the following year'- which must have been in 857 if he had arrived in 856 - 'Sidroc left the river'.[8] Why and precisely when he and his fleet left and for what reason and where they went to are unknown.[9] Also under the year 857 Prudentius says:

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defence of the West Frankish Kingdom against the Viking invasions, 840-877, although I do differ from him on a number of points.

[1] See S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 44, where he also says: 'Charles the Bald was at Verberie [dep. Oise] when the fleets arrived [see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 189, pp. 492-94), and held his autumn assembly at Neaufles [dep. Eure] on 1 September (see *Primum missaticum ad Francos et Aquitanos directum*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, chap. 3, p. 283). Despite the King's apparent lack of action against the Vikings, he was in fact keeping a close eye on their movements, and Hincmar referred to the assembly as "quando in excubiis contra Nortmannorum infestationem degebamus"' (see *Hincmari archiepiscopi Remensis epistolarum pars prior*, ed. E. Perels, *MGH*, *Epistolae Karolini aevi*, 6 (Berlin, 1939), no. 131, p. 72.

[2] *Tertium missaticum ad Francos et Aquitanos directum*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, chap. 3, p. 285. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 44: 'On 10 October [856] the King decided to make his move, and mustering the army at Chartres, he advanced into the forest of Perche and won a resounding victory over the invaders.' J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 181: 'Charles summoned forces against the attackers "and smote them with great slaughter". Though the Vikings settled down at Jeufosse to overwinter, this effective resistance showed Charles determined to protect his heartlands.'

[3] For which see *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 73; trans. Nelson, p. 83; see also *ASC* 855.

[4] P. Stafford, 'Charles the Bald, Judith and England' in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, pp. 139-53, at pp. 142-51; *eadem*, 'The king's wife in Wessex', *Past and Present*, 91 (1981), pp. 5-27; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 182, where she writes: 'For part of the campaigning season, Charles had a prestigious companion: King Æthelwulf of Wessex;' *eadem*, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 83, n. 11. Another interpretation of this marriage is proposed by M. J. Enright, 'Charles the Bald and Æthelwulf of Wessex: the alliance of 856 and strategies of royal succession', *Journal of Medieval Studies*, 5 (1979), pp. 291-302.

[5] For Prudentius's silences see J. L. Nelson, 'The Annals of St Bertin', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, pp. 23-40, at p. 31; *eadem*, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 9.

[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 44-45.

[7] *AB* 856: ed. Grat, pp. 74-75; trans. Nelson, p. 83.

[8] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 91; trans. Coupland.

[9] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 186, says that Charles 'had already induced a Viking force under Sidroc to quit the Seine before the close of 857', although there is no hint in the record that Charles had 'induced' this withdrawal. Regarding Sidroc's departure, S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 46, says this was 'possibily in return for a tribute payment', which might or might not have been the case. In my view he must have withdrawn during the first half of the year. Also in my opinion, if Sidroc had been responsible for the attack on Paris on 28 December 856 (whether in league with Bjørn or not) Charles may have paid him to leave. Paying off one Scandinavian chieftain whilst leaving others in place was not uncommon, as witnessed later in connection with the siege of Paris in 885-87

'The Danes who were coming up the Seine ravaged everything unchecked. They attacked Paris where they burned the church of SS-Peter and Genevieve and all the other churches except for the cathedral of St-Stephen, the Church of SS-Vincent and Germain and also the church of St-Denis: a great ransom was paid in cash to save these churches from being burned.'[1] From where this entry is placed in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* this would seem to have taken place a little after August 857. But Vogel suggested that: 'Aus den Worten des Prudentius geht nicht ganz klar hervor, ob 857 nochmals ein Überfall auf Paris erfolgte; wahrscheinlich handelt es sich jedoch nur um einen Angriff,'[2] 'From the words of Prudentius it is not completely clear whether another assault on Paris followed in 857; though probably it concerns just one attack.'[3] This is an opinion followed by Coupland,[4] although many historians contend that there were indeed two attacks on Paris.[5] Whatever the truth of the matter given that Sidroc had seemingly left the Seine sometime in early 857 if this second attack on Paris really happened it must, I think, have been undertaken by Bjørn.

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during which the Danish 'king' and chieftain Sigfrid accepted a payment to leave whilst others remained. One possibility regarding where Sidroc went to is Prudentius's report that in the autumn of 857 'other Danes [meaning *not* those who were supposedly attacking Paris for a second time] stormed the *emporium* called Durestad and ravaged the whole island of Betuwe and other neighbouring districts' (see *AB* 857: ed. Grat, p. 75; trans. Nelson, p. 85). The important emporium of Dorestad might have been vulnerable and unprotected because the Frisian-based Dane Rorik who had controlled it since 850 had recently left for Denmark; the *Annals of Fulda* (*AF* 857: ed. Kurze, p. 47; trans. Reuter, p. 39) say that in 857, probably in about April: 'Roric the Northman, who ruled in Dorestad, took a fleet to the lands of the Danes with the agreement of his lord King Lothar. With the agreement of Horic, king of the Danes, he and his comrades occupied the part of the kingdom which lies between the sea and the Eider'. The Danes responsible for the attack on Dorestad in 857 most likely then attacked Utrecht and forced Bishop Hunger to flee: see K. van Vliet, 'Traiecti muros heu! The Bishop of Utrecht during and after the Viking Invasions of Frisia (834-925)', in R. Simek and U. Engel (eds.), *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent research on early medieval relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia* (Vienna, 2004), pp 133-154, at p. 140; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 159. It was probably Rorik who made an attack on Saxony in the spring of 858 as reported by Prudentius (*AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 78; trans. Nelson, p. 87): see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 160; H. Harthausen, *Die Normanneneinfälle im Elb- und Weserlmündungsgebiet mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Schlacht von 880* (Hildesheim, 1966), p. 31. As discussed in Chapter 4, Sidroc had been allied with the Frisian-Dane Godfrid Haraldsson (Rorik's cousin) on the Seine in 852-53 which might suggest they had a common origin - certainly 'Denmark' but quite possibly Danish-controlled Frisia.

[1] *AB* 857: ed. Grat, p.75; trans. Nelson, p. 85.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 155; a view already expressed by J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 2, p. 165, and E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches*, vol. 1, pp. 423-24.

[3] My translation.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 45: 'Although Prudentius described two attacks on the city in the same year, both passages undoubtedly referred to a single raid; it is inconceivable that churches could have been burned in December and then ransomed or even burned again a few months later. The church of Ste Geneviève was one of many destroyed by fire, but the cathedral of St Etienne was ransomed, as were the abbeys of St Denis and St Germain-des-Prés. The relics of St Genevieve had doubtless already been taken to Marizy-Sainte-Geneviève (Aisne), although the body of St Denis was still in its tomb. The ransom of St Germain-des-Prés implies that, as at St Denis, the saint's remains were still in their usual resting place.'

[5] See for example J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 185: 'In late summer 857, Paris was raided again'. F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 11 -12, says: 'Quelques mois après [the attack on Paris at the end of 856], ils reparaissent et livrent aux flammes la basilique de l'abbaye de Sainte-Geneviève et les églises de la région parisienne. La cathédrale, dédiée alors à Saint-Étienne, et les grandes abbayes de Saint-Germain-des-Prés et de Saint-Denis n'échappèrent à l'incendie qu'en versant aux barbares des sommes considérables.' His evidence for this, besides that of Prudentius, is given at p. 11, nn. 4, 5, p. 12, n. 1.

In what seems to be a reference to 857, just after mentioning Sidroc's departure the chronicler of Fontenelle says: 'Bjørn built a stronghold on a certain island',[1] which was identified by Vogel, followed by Coupland, as being at Oissel.[2] The general view is that sometime in 857 Bjørn moved downriver from Jeufosse to Oissel near Rouen.[3] Coupland says: 'The movements of the Viking army on the Seine in 857 are completely unknown.[4] No raids at all are reported in contemporary texts, since the attack on Chartres described by Prudentius *sub anno* 857 almost certainly took place in 858. The silence of the sources in such cases is extremely difficult to interpret. Does it indicate that the Northmen remained quietly in their camp; that their victims were only peasant farms and villages, rather than important abbeys or towns; that the author was not informed about the Vikings' movements, or perhaps that he preferred not to record them? "Fastidiosum est enarrare", declared the Xanten annalist' - it is loathsome to relate.[5] Whether or not Bjørn's Northmen had remained 'quietly in their camp' throughout 857, which I would rather doubt,[6] by 858 certain Northmen based on the Seine were again highly present and active.

We need to explore the activities of the Northmen on and around the Seine in 858 with a little more attention than had hitherto been attempted because much is still uncertain, particularly regarding which chieftains were involved in which raids and sometimes actually when they took place.

Strange as it may at first sight appear these events in the north have a great bearing on subsequent events in the south: on the Loire, in Aquitaine and even in Spain.

The *Miracula sancti Wandregisili* (*Miracles of Saint Wandrille*) say that very early in the year 858, in fact probably on 9 January, the monastic community at Fontenelle fled with their relics first to Bloville (dep. Pas-de-Calais) and then to the church of Saint-Pierre near Quentovic

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[1] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 90, 91; trans. Coupland.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 163 and n. 1; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 46. For an earlier and rather different view of the location of *Oscellus* see J. Lair, *Les Normands dans l'île d'Oscelle*, pp. 9-39, followed by F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 25, n. 5.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 46.

[4] Presumably except for Bjørn's move to Oissel at some point in the year.

[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 45-6.

[6] R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (Harlow, 1983), p. 234, says: 'During 857 the Vikings left the Seine basin but by early 858 they had returned.' As noted above despite the Frisian-based Dane Rorik having left Frisia for Denmark in early 857, with Lothar's 'agreement' it seems (see *AF* 857: ed. Kurze, p. 47; Reuter, p. 39), Lothar's realm was still being attacked by other Northmen, see *AB* 857: ed. Grat, p. 75; trans. Nelson, p. 85: 'Other Danes stormed the *emporium* called Durestad and ravaged the whole island of Betuwe and other neighbouring districts.' As was remarked earlier this raid might have been conducted by Sidroc after he left the Seine, but it is perhaps even possible that the remaining Northmen under Bjørn were involved and that they had not remained 'quietly in their camp' throughout 857.

on the Canche where they arrived on the eve of Ascension, 11 May.[1] Also it is possible that in the early months of the year an attack was made into the Amiénois but was beaten back by the abbot of Corbie, Odo, but Odo may have achieved his small victory during the siege of Oissel in the summer.[2]

In the spring of the same year the Northmen also undertook a double offensive along both sides of the Seine into the Parisian region, no doubt with the intention of taking advantage of the Christians who assembled for Easter at the abbeys of Saint-Denis and Saint-Germain-des-Prés.[3] At Saint-Denis they managed to capture two illustrious magnates: Abbot Louis of Saint-Denis and his half-brother Gauzlin. The Northmen 'demanded a very heavy fine for their ransom. In order to pay this, many church treasuries in Charles's realm were drained dry, at the king's command. But even all this was far from being enough: to bring it up to the required amount, large sums were eagerly contributed also by the king, and by all the bishops, abbots, counts and other powerful men'.[4]

At Saint-Germain-des-Prés the Northmen had less luck. They arrived on Easter Sunday morning,[5] but according to Aimoin's *Miracula sancti Germani* the saint's remains had already

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[1] Miracles of Saint Wandrille: *Ex miraculis sancti Wandregisili*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 406-9, at chaps. 2, 4, 17, pp. 407-9. See also F. Lot, *Études critiques sur l'abbaye de Saint-Wandrille*, pp. xxxi-xxxvi; *idem*, 'La grande invasion', p. 18; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 46-47, and at p. 47: 'It is possible that the remains of St Austreberta were also moved to safety from Pavilly (Seine-Maritime) at this time, but the tenth-century description of the saint's miracles offers no chronological indications.'

[2] This is based on two letters of Lupus of Ferrières to Odo the abbot of Corbie (letters 111 and 112, pp. 327-30, in L. Levillain's 'Étude sur les lettres de Loup de Ferrières', and letters 106 and 107 in *Correspondance*, ed. Levillain, vol. 2, pp. 134-40, 142 44). In the first letter Lupus deplores that many of the abbot's men had been wounded in an engagement with the 'barbarians' (see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 306, n. 5). Levillain dates these letters to about September 858 ('Étude', p. 329), and suggests ('Étude', p. 330) that Odo's 'victoire d'Odon sur les pirates' was 'probablement un fait très secondaire de l'expédition générale dirigée en cette année [858] contre les Normands, dont parlent les Annales de Saint-Bertin'. An opinion and dating followed by F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 18: 'Une bande s'avança dans l'été [of 858] sur l'Amiénois, mais elle fut battue par l'abbé de Corbie, Eudes, et les chevaliers de sa suite.' But he adds (*ibid*., p. 18, n. 3): 'Nous adoptons l'interprétation que donne M. Levillain […] des lettres 111-112 de Loup de Ferrières. La lettre 111 a dû être écrite en juillet-août 858, ce qui nous oblige de voir dans les Normands qui s'en prennent à l'Amiénois, où est Corbie, non pas les Normands de la Somme, lesquels n'apparaissent qu'au printemps de 859 […], mais ceux de la Seine. A remarquer, d'ailleurs, que l'attaque contre Beauvais et Noyon en 859 est encore le fait de ces derniers.' W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 164, n. 3, thinks these letters of 858 refer to Odo being involved in a short skirmish (*Gefecht*) during the siege of Oissel. However, S. Coupland (*Charles the Bald*, p. 52), J. L. Nelson (*The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 9) and P. Bauduin (*Le monde franc*, p. 306 and n. 5) place this fight of Odo in the next year, 859.

[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 19.

[4] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 77; trans. Nelson, p. 86. Prudentius says 'brother' but Gauzlin was Louis's half-brother. For Louis and Gauzlin see initially F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 19 and n. 3, p. 20, n. 1; K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere, Markgraf von Anjou: der Stammvater des kapetingischen Hauses* (Berlin, 1871), pp. 136-41, 165; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 86, n. 6; see also Hildegar of Meaux: *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH*, *SRM*, 5 (Hanover, 1910), pp. 171-203, c. 124, p. 201; Aimoin of Saint-Germain, Miracles of Saint Germain, *Miracula sancti Germani*, *AA*, *SS*, Maii VI (Antwerp, 1688), pp. 796-805, II. 10, p. 803.

[5] In his thesis *Charles the Bald* (at pp. 47-48) Simon Coupland went to great lengths to argue that there was no attack on Saint-German-des-Prés on Easter day 858 and that the capture of Louis and Gauzlin had occurred in late 857 and they had been ransomed and released by February or March 858. However, Coupland is now of another opinion. In his as yet unpublished book based on his 1987 thesis Coupland writes: 'The abbey of St

been removed by the end of 857 to Combs-la-Ville on the Yères and then to Esmans on the Yonne, accompanied by most of the monastic community.[1]

In 858 the Northmen also attacked Chartres on 12 June where Bishop Frotbald purportedly drowned in the river Eure whilst trying to escape.[2] Prudentius's last annal for 857 reads: 'As the Danes attacked his *civitas*, Frotbald bishop of Chartres fled on foot and tried to swim across the river Eure but he was overwhelmed by the waters and drowned'. But in a Chartres necrology Frotbald's murder/death along with that of twelve of his companions is dated to 12 June 858 and was caused *a paganis Sequanensibus*,[3] to which year and date most historians, including myself, would now shift this attack on Chartres.[4]

Furthermore, according to Ermentarius, the monk of Saint-Philibert, who was writing only a few years afterwards, they also attacked Évreux and Bayeux: 'Évreux et Bayeux sont dévastées et les autres cités plus ou moins éloignées sont envahies.'[5] We have no other independent report of an attack on Évreux or its precise date, but in a notice for 859 Prudentius says that the Northmen who were still active 'on the Seine' had attacked the *civitas* of Noyon and captured Bishop Immo and other nobles, who they carried off with them and slew them on their march,[6] as well as that two months earlier they had killed Ermenfrid the bishop of Beauvais;[7] but Prudentius then retrospectively adds that in 'the previous year', hence sometime

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Germain-des-Prés and the town of Chartres were both among the Vikings' victims in 858, in addition to which they also achieved one of their greatest coups in capturing Abbot Louis of St Denis, the royal chancellor, and his brother, Gauzlin, abbot of St Maur [*sic*] […]. The Vikings arrived at St Germain-des-Prés on Easter Sunday morning, just as they had done thirteen years earlier, in 845. It is possible that the Northmen hoped to catch the brothers unawares and to benefit from a larger than usual congregation, but if so they were disappointed. The saint's remains had already been removed to Combs-la-Ville, and most of the monks who had remained behind to guard the abbey, and who were celebrating the office, managed to hide, though one was killed. To judge from Aimoin's account, the raiding party was not particularly large, and the abbey was left undamaged.' Actually, this Gauzlin in 858, who later became the abbot of Saint-Denis and the bishop of Paris, must be distinquished from another earlier (though related) Gauzlin who became the abbot of Saint-Maur at Glanfeuil in 844.

[1] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *Miracula sancti Germani*, *AA*, *SS*, Maii VI (Antwerp, 1688), II. 5, p. 803; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 21 and nn. 2, 3, pp. 22-23 and n. 1.

[2] Our sources for this attack on Chartres are a necrology of Notre-Dame of Chartres (R. Merlet and abbé Clerval, *Un manuscrit chartrain du XIe siècle* (Chartres, 1893), p. 166); various passages in a collection of charters collected together in the late eleventh century by the monk Paul of the abbey of Saint-Père-en-Vallée, near to Chartres, known as the *Vetus Agano/Liber Hagani* (cf. *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. B. Guérard, vol. 1 (Paris, 1840)), and Prudentius of Troyes in the so-called *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, mistakenly under the year 857 (*AB* 857: ed. Grat, p. 75; trans. Nelson, p. 85).

[3] R. Merlet and abbé Clerval, *Un manuscrit chartrain*, p. 166; E. Mabillon, *Analecta*, II, p. 550.

[4] Most extensively and convincingly argued by F. Lot in 'La prise de Chartres par les Normands en 858', in *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2, pp. 771-80. See also an editor's note in the *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, ed. Grat *et al*, p. 75, n. 2, and S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 45, 48; followed by J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 85, n. 8; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 162.

[5] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, p. 62; trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, p. 132. Ermentarius also reports the taking of Chartres.

[6] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 10, dates Immo's death to 'late 859'.

[7] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91.

in 858, and probably in the summer,[1] 'they [apparently some Northmen based on the Seine] had slain Baltfrid bishop of Bayeux',[2] which confirms Ermentarius's report and dates it. That the attacks on Évreux and Bayeux in 858, both west of the Seine, had emanated from the Seine seems reasonably though not completely clear.

During all this time Charles the Bald had done nothing to confront the Northmen on the Seine. He was mostly concerned in these years with Aquitaine and his nephew Pippin II, as well as the rebels in Neustria and on the Loire. Whatever the reasons for Charles's 'inaction', as Lot called it,[3] Charles did eventually start to respond. When at Quierzy on the Oise in March 858 Charles met with his nephew Lothar II and they 'reaffirmed their alliance'.[4] Still at Quierzy on 21 March Charles also 'gave renewed assurances on oath, and in turn took new oaths of loyalty from key *fideles*, including the Burgundian Isembard, seven leading men of Francia proper, and three from northern Neustria who thus distanced themselves from the rebels in the Loire valley'.[5]

Charles's new 'alliance' with Lothar II was doubtless made because he wanted his nephew to join with him to confront and expel the Northmen operating on the Seine and attacking Paris. The *Annals of Fulda* say that Louis the German had sent legates to Lothar in the early spring asking him to come to meet with him at the castle of Koblenz on 9 May. Lothar had replied that he would come, but when Louis got to Koblenz at the agreed time 'Lothar did not come, nor would he send any of his men'.[6] The Fulda annalist says that the reason why Lothar had not come was because 'he had made a treaty with Charles against the king [Louis]',[7] but the 'treaty' was probably not aimed against Louis but was rather directed against the Northmen.[8]

From Quierzy Charles descended the Oise to Verberie[9] where he met with the Scandinavian chieftain Bjørn sometime at the end of March or the beginning of April 858.[10] Prudentius says: 'Bjørn chief of one group of the pirates on the Seine, came to King Charles at the palace of Verberie, gave himself into his hands and swore fidelity in his own fashion.'[11] Why had Bjørn

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[1] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 18 and n. 4.
[2] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91. More will be said of this attack on Bayeux later.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 23.
[4] *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 268, pp. 293-95; which Janet Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 186, n. 112, says was 'clearly a riposte to Louis the German's meeting with Lothar in February (*AF* 858) unmentioned in *AB*'.
[5] *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 269, pp. 296-97; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 186 and n. 113. These rebels in the Loire valley included Robert the Strong who had rebelled in 858 or possibly even in 856.
[6] *AF* 858: ed. Kurze, p. 49; trans. Reuter, p. 41.
[7] *Ibid*.
[8] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 24, n. 3.
[9] *Ibid*., p. 24.
[10] This is from where it appears in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, and the fact that Charles went to Verberie after leaving Quierzy. See J. L. Nelson *Charles the Bald*, p. 187; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 24, nn. 1, 2.
[11] *AB* 857: ed. Grat, pp. 76-77; trans. Nelson, p. 86.

submitted to Charles even if this was 'à la mode de chez lui, à la manière barbare'?[1] He was most likely paid a tribute of some sort.[2] Scandinavian chieftains always demanded something in return for an oath of fidelity or for their baptism and their Frankish counterparts also wanted something from such payments. I shall return to this subject below. By late June Charles was ready to act. According to Prudentius:

> In July,[3] King Charles came to the island of Oissel in the Seine to besiege the Danes ensconced there. There the Young Charles, his son, arrived from Aquitaine and along with him came Pippin, now a layman. King Charles received Pippin and handed over to him some counties and monasteries in Aquitaine. In August too, King Lothar hastened to that same island of Oissel, to bring help to his uncle. They stayed there till 23 September, without making any progress in the siege. They then went home.[4]

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[1] *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, ed. Grat *et al*, p. 77, n. 1.

[2] S. Coupland explains it as follows: 'Given that the Northmen had not suffered any recent military setbacks, there is no obvious cause for Bjørn's submission unless he was offered some form of inducement. The cases of Godfrid in 853 and Weland in 861 suggest themselves as parallels, in that both men were paid a tribute, and the latter also commended himself to the King. The hypothesis that Bjørn received a tribute is also strengthened by the reference to just such a payment in a letter sent by the West Frankish bishops to Louis the German in November 858. The bishops, who were meeting at Quierzy, urged the King to help the West Frankish populace resist the Vikings, 'so that the kingdom which is being ransomed should be freed from this undeserved tribute. It seems unlikely that the bishops would have been referring to the small tribute given to Godfrid five years earlier, still less to the payment of 845, and they presumably had a more recent ransom in mind. A tribute paid to Bjørn earlier in the year would obviously fit the bill. In short, it is likely that Charles the Bald gave Bjørn a tribute in 858, although, as in the case of Godfrid, it was probably too small to merit comment from the annalists' (*Unpublished book*). He says much the same elsewhere: *idem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 147; *idem*, 'The Frankish tribute payments to the Vikings and their consequences', p. 61: 'Although there is no mention of a payment to Bjørn in any contemporary narrative source, a letter written by the West Frankish bishops in November 858 describes a tribute which was being raised to pay off the Vikings'; *idem*, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 103-4, where he writes that the idea that Bjørn received a tribute 'is corroborated by a letter written by the West Frankish bishops to Louis the German in November 858, in which the prelates mentioned an otherwise unknown tribute which was being raised to pay off the Vikings.' The famous letter Coupland is referring to was written from a synod held at Quierzy in November to Louis the German who had just invaded West Francia and was at the time at Attigny; see *Epistola synodi Carisiacensis ad Hludowicum regem Germaniae directa*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, chap. 6, p. 431; *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 843-859*, ed. W. Hartmann, *MGH*, *Concilia*, vol. 3 (Hanover, 1984), chap. 6, p. 412-13. In the letter Hincmar (who probably wrote it) said: 'The Kingdom, which is being ransomed, should be freed from this undeserved tribute.' However, this letter, though suggestive, does not really provide any support for the assumption (that I also make) of the payment of a tribute to Bjørn over six months before. The ransoming of the kingdom could well refer to the huge ransom paid for the release of Abbot Abbo and Gauzlin earlier in the year which had taken some time to collect and the payment for the release of Gauzlin was made by Hincmar's own church of Reims. Finally, I am not sure whether the tribute had to have been so small as Coupland suggests. J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 187-88, says: 'Early in 858, Charles won over a Viking warlord, Bjørn, and recruited him and his men into his own following,' and that 'Sidroc and Bjørn, once paid off, kept their side of the bargain', although what Bjørn's 'bargain' had consisted of is not explored. P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 94, simply asserts that, 'Le chef Normand reçut probablement un tribut à cette occasion'.

[3] The siege commenced on 1 July.

[4] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 78; trans. Nelson, p. 87. In MS 'O' a later note was added at the beginning of 858 which reads: 'This was the year when Charles attacked that island in the Seine called Oissel where he endured grave danger as many people realised at the time, and when his brother Louis attacked him with all his army, but, by the granting of God's mercy, withdrew without honour.' See J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 85, n. 1, who

I do not intend to examine the siege of Oissel in 858 in detail, for which there are a number of contemporary or near contemporary sources[1] and several good analyses have been written - giving varying interpretations.[2] But it is important to note that the siege only ended because as the monk of Fontenelle says Charles 'was forced to abandon it by the actions of his brother Louis and certain rebels'.[3] Essentially Charles's half-brother Louis the German had finally resolved on seizing Charles's kingdom and while Charles was still besieging Oissel he had advanced deep into West Francia. When Charles heard the news, he abandoned the siege and marched to confront Louis.[4]

But our concern is with the Northmen so let us now explore who the Northmen involved in all these attacks in 858 were, including the identity of those who Charles vainly besieged on the island of *Oscellus*.

What is most intriguing is that when telling of Bjørn giving himself into Charles's hands and swearing fidelity in his own fashion Prudentius says that Bjørn (*Berno*) was a *dux partis pyratarum Sequanae*. He immediately goes on the say that: 'Another group of those pirates' ('Pars altere eorundem pyratarum') captured Abbot Louis of St-Denis along with his brother Gauzlin, and demanded a very heavy fine for their ransom. In order to pay this many church treasuries in Charles's realm were drained dry, at the king's command. But even all this was far from being enough: to bring it up to the required amount, large sums were eagerly contributed also by the king, and by all the bishops, abbots, counts and other powerful men.'[5] So whilst it is fashionable to alter Prudentius' testimony and dating in his latter years it seems very clear that those responsible for the attack on the abbeys of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Saint-Denis during Easter 858 and the capture of Abbot Louis and his half-brother Gauzlin were not made by Bjørn's Northmen.

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says: 'This later note was perhaps added to correct the bias of Prudentius's silences.' On this point see also S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 133.

[1] As well as the short reports in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, the *Chronicle of Fontenell*e and the *Annals of Fulda*, we have Hildegar's *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, c. 125, p. 201; Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *De translatione sanctorum Georgii monachi, Aurelii et Nathaliae*, *AA, SS*, Iulii VI (Paris, 1868), pp. 459-69, at c. 28, p. 465; *Libellus proclamationis adversus Wenilonem*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, chap. 5, p. 451; Hincmar, *De villa Noviliaco*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 2 (Hanover, 1888), pp. 1167-69, at p. 1168.

[2] See for example S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 131-34; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 163-64; J. Lair, *Les Normands dans l'île d'Oscelle (855-861)* (Paris, 1897), p. 13, extracted from *Mémoires de la Société historique et archéologique de Pontoise et du Vexin*, 20; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 28-29; A. d'Haenens, *Les invasions normandes, une catastrophe?* (Paris, 1970), p. 54; C. M. Gillmor, *Warfare and the Military under Charles the Bald, 840-877* (Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 138-39.

[3] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, pp. 90 and 91; trans. Coupland.

[4] For Louis the German's invasion and attempted seizure of Charles' kingdom in 858 see *inter alia*: *AB* 858: ed. Grat, pp. 78-79; trans. Nelson, pp. 88-89; *AF* 858: ed. Kurze, pp. 50-51; trans. Reuter, pp. 41-44; E. J. Goldberg, *Struggle for Empire*, pp. 254-58; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 188-92; E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfränkischen Reiches*, vol. 1, pp. 426-46.

[5] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 77; trans. Nelson, p. 86.

Ferdinand Lot was of the opinion that once Sidroc had left the valley of the Seine in (early?) 857 Bjørn was left all alone, holed up in his *forteresse* on the island of *Oscellus* and reduced to his own forces, forces which would not have sufficed ('eut difficilement pu suffire') to account for the 'recrudescence de dévastations' in 858.[1] In fact it seems that Lot did not believe that any of the Scandinavian *dévastations* during the whole of 858 can be put down to Bjørn. They were rather the deeds of 'une nouvelle bande' which 'fit son apparition dans la Seine',[2] perhaps in early 858.[3] It was these new arrivals, according to him, who took and burned the monastery of Saint-Wandrille at Fontenelle on 9 January. In addition, regarding the double attack on the monasteries of Saint-Denis, during which Abbot Louis and his younger half-brother Gauzlin were supposedly captured, and on Saint-Germain-des-Prés, which both seem to have happened at Easter, and even which Northmen were besieged from 1 July on the island of *Oscellus*, Lot dismisses the evidence of the *Chronicle of Fonentelle* which says: 'The following year [which here must mean 857] Sidroc left the river. Bjørn built a stronghold on a certain island [*Oscellus*], where King Charles besieged him in a naval blockade in the year 859.' Clearly the monk of Fontenelle's dating here is wrong because Charles's siege of *Oscellus* happened in the summer of 858, as we know from Prudentius amongst others. Nevertheless, in Lot's opinion the meeting of Bjørn and Charles at Verberie took place at about the same time as the raids to Saint-Denis and Saint-Germain-des-Prés, which leads him to ask: 'Faudrait-il en conclure que Bjœrn rompit ses engagements aussitôt après les avoir prêtés et retourna s'enfermer dans l'île?'[4] His answer is 'pas nécessairement'.[5] Lot would accept Prudentius's report and its date but only accepts from the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* that Bjørn had first constructed the *forteresse* on the island of *Oscellus*.[6] This is all very vague and in fact only a few pages previously Lot had said something apparently completely different. After stating that 'Bjœrn, demeuré seul après le départ de Sidroc, avait transformé en forteresse l'île d'*Oscellus*', he then continues by saying, 'De là [*Oscellus*] ses hommes [Bjørn's], qui s'étaient exercés à l'équitation, s'elançaient dans toutes les directions pour faire des razzias. La plus belle opération de ce genre fut tentée au printemps […]. Deux bandes à cheval partirent de Jeufosse[7] le vendredi saint de 858', their intention, he says, being

[1] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 18-19.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 18
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 24, n. 1
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] Following Jules Lair; for Lot *Oscellus* was at Jeufosse and he uses the names somewhat indiscriminately.

to make surprise attacks on 'les deux grands monastères de la région parisienne, Saint-Denis et Saint-Germain-des-Prés, d'enlever les abbés et de les mettre à rançon'.[1]

We do not know which of these two contradictory views Lot ultimately held.[2] If we take Lot's opinion that Bjørn had not immediately broken his 'engagements' then where had he disappeared to and what had his engagements towards Charles the Bald consisted of? Lot does not explore this.[3] Finally, in regard to the capture of Chartres, in his excellent short article 'La prise de Chartres par les Normands en 858' Lot writes: 'En 858, Bjœrn s'est soumis, vers mars ou avril. Mais une *pars altera* des Normands a continué ses ravages : la prise de Chartres est due à ces derniers, partis de la Seine, dit Prudence ou son interpolateur, donc à des Danois de l'île d'*Oscellus*,'[4] although Lot rather glosses over the fact that Prudentius actually says that this *pars altera* was that which captured abbots Louis and Gauzlin (i.e. in the Parisian region) and not that it had been responsible for taking Chartres.[5]

On the other hand Walther Vogel was quite clear that Bjørn's Northmen were those besieged from 1 July on the island of *Oscellus*.[6] But he is also adamant that the earlier capture of Abbot Louis of Saint-Denis and Gauzlin was by a 'normannischen Streifkorps, das nicht unter Björns Befehlen stand',[7] 'Scouting unit/band of Northmen that was not under Björn's command'.[8] As already noted earlier it is most likely that this was indeed the case because Prudentius explicitly wrote that it was 'another group' of the pirates on the Seine and not Bjørn's that had captured Louis and Gauzlin.[9] We know from a little later that the Scandinavian fleets operating on the Seine comprised many separate 'brotherhoods' (*sodalitates*) and 'flotillas' (*classes*)[10] led by

[1] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 19.
[2] Of course, Lot may have meant that only Bjørn (and maybe a few followers?) had submitted to Charles at Verberie (and probably been paid a tribute), and then he departed for somewhere else or he remained with Charles, whilst *ses hommes* remained on the island of *Oscellus* from where they made the attacks on the Parisian region. If so he does not say this.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 24, n. 1: 'La prétendue identité du Bjœrn de 856-858 avec le *Bjoern Jernside* des sagas islandaises sera plus tard l'objet d'une discussion particulière.' This planned discussion was unfortunately never written as far as I can see.
[4] F. Lot, 'La prise de Chartres par les Normands', p. 780.
[5] Which he reports under 857.
[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 161, 164. Vogel also identified *Oscellus* with Oissel: *ibid*., pp. 162-63 and p. 163, n. 1; a view taken up later by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 46-47.
[7] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 161. Whilst accepting that abbots Louis and Gauzlin were captured in 858 (*ibid.*), Vogel (*ibid*., p. 182) places the raid on Saint-Germain-des-Prés, as reported by Aimoin of Saint-Germain, in 861, linking it with Prudentius's report that at the beginning of 861: 'In January, the Danes burned Paris and with it the church of SS-Vincent the martyr and Germain the confessor' (see *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 84; trans. Nelson, p. 94). F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 22-23, n. 1, commented on this suggestion, which had in the past been made by several others, and showed why it is incorrect.
[8] My translation. *Streifkorps* is an anachronistic term here and is very difficult to translate into English; probably just 'band' or 'warband' would do.
[9] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 77; trans. Nelson, p. 86.
[10] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 96; *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 98.

chieftains whose names we do not know. Besides Bjørn and Weland and his unnamed sons (who only arrived on the Seine in 861, for which see below), we do not know the names of any of these other chieftains. It may be tempting to bring the legendary Hasting into the picture here because the monk Paul of Chartres in MS A of his so-called *Liber Hagani* says that Hasting (*Alstingus*) was responsible for the attack on Chartres,[1] but Paul's whole story is based on a mishmash of oral tradition and is of little or no historical value - or at least not here.[2]

Simon Coupland is of the opinion that after Sidroc had left the Seine Bjørn moved from Jeufosse and 'built a stronghold on an island at Oissel'.[3] It was from here that 'the Vikings', presumably Bjørn's, 'raided Bayeux, Évreux and the surrounding district'.[4] Given that at least the raid on Bayeux took place in 858 Coupland seems to be suggesting that the 'raids' on both Bayeux and Évreux took place early in 858 before Bjørn commended himself to Charles the Bald at Verberie.[5] He adds: 'Given the absence of any alternative explanation, it was presumably the promise of a tribute payment which persuaded Bjørn to come to Charles the Bald at Verberie in early 858 to commend himself to the king.'[6] 'Charles evidently welcomed the Viking leader, and the fact that the sources no longer mention Bjørn's name when referring to the army which remained on the Seine suggests that he kept faith with the king. Perhaps he remained at the Frankish court [...] perhaps he took the money and left the kingdom.'[7] Finally Coupland says: 'It is, however, extremely unlikely that he was on Oissel when Charles laid siege to the island later in the year, as the author of the *Annals of Fontenelle* implies. According to the fuller account of events in the *Annals of St Bertin* it was only after Bjørn had sworn fealty that the king besieged the island, and this seems plausible, in that Charles may have been sufficiently encouraged by this turn of events to contemplate trying to force the remaining Vikings to leave the Seine [...]. The Viking army which Bjørn had led nevertheless remained on the Seine and continued its excesses.'[8] Following Coupland Pierre Bauduin would also have it that Bjørn 'semble avoir gardé sa fidélité au roi ou du moins avoir quitté le pays avant l'assaut tenté par Charles contre Oissel au début de l'été';[9] however without exploring what 'sa fidélité' might have entailed.

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[1] *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. B. Guérard, vol. 1, pp. 6-8.
[2] See F. Lot, 'La prise de Chartres par les Normands', pp. 771-80; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 162 and n. 2.
[3] S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 103-4.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] In *Charles the Bald*, p. 147, Simon Coupland says: 'It was after Bjørn had sworn fealty that the King besieged the island, and Charles's aim was almost certainly to weaken the Scandinavian forces before undertaking the assault.'
[6] *Ibid*. See also the earlier note regarding a tribute being paid to Bjørn.
[7] S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 104
[8] *Ibid*.
[9] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 94.

Having outlined the quite contrasting views of some historians I will now present my own analysis.

First, it is almost certain that Bjørn's Northmen had not been responsible for the double raid towards Paris around Easter of 858. Nor were they those besieged on Oissel from July onwards. Whether those involved were a 'new band' come from somewhere as Lot thought or they were just some of the independent flotillas or 'brotherhoods' which had arrived with Bjørn (or even Sidroc?) in 856 will never be known.

Second, I cannot agree with Coupland that Bjørn had possibly abandoned his fleet and 'remained at the Frankish court' or that it was implicitly *all* of his former fleet that had remained on Oissel 'and continued its excesses'. As with the slightly later case of Weland's commendation and subsequent baptism (which is discussed below) powerful Scandinavian chieftains like Bjørn never willingly gave up the source of their power - their fleet - and when they commended themselves to a Frankish king they only ever did so for a significant payment (and/or a grant of land), either for their withdrawal from the area or for mercenary services they were expected to render.

In the present case I tend to think that the tribute Charles doubtless paid Bjørn was indeed for his withdrawal from the Seine, but perhaps there was more involved. A simple payment for a withdrawal did not necessarily have to involve a commendation as well. In the ninth century and afterwards such a commendation by a Scandinavian chieftain was often part of a wider bargain involving some service to be performed. If so, what might this service have been?

Thus, fourthly and relatedly, what of the case of the attack on Bayeux where Bishop Baltfrid died, or of the attack on Évreux which doubtless also occurred in 858? It was precisely in 858 that King Charles was most troubled by the rebellion of the Neustrians, most particularly that of Robert the Strong; a rebellion that had first been precipitated by Charles's grant of Neustria to his young son Louis the Stammerer in 856.[1] Bayeux and Évreux were both in Neustria. In return for a payment might Charles have asked Bjørn at Verberie to attack these places in Neustria to help him bring the Neustrians back in line?[2] It is possible. All we can say is that Coupland's implicit and lurking assumption that the attacks on the Neustrian towns of Bayeux and Évreux were undertaken by Bjørn's Northmen *before* his commendation to Charles at

[1] For which see *AB* 856: ed. Grat, p. 72; trans. Nelson, pp. 81-82; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 182-86.

[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 187, says that in 858: 'What Charles now needed was a substantial military success. Northern and eastern Neustria [meaning no doubt Bayeux and Évreux] were suffering from Viking raids on an unprecedented scale. Could Charles now repeat the propaganda triumph of 848? [meaning here the rather token success on the Dordogne during the siege of Bordeaux] Would victory over the Vikings bring another political renaissance, this time in Neustria?' This, of course, is all a lead up to the assault on Oissel.

Verberie is not supported by any evidence even of a circumstantial nature. Attacks on these two towns by Bjørn's warband as part of a bargain with Charles make slightly more sense given the geopolitical context at the time; although this view as well can never be proved or disproved one way or the other.

Finally, if Bjørn had really left the Seine perhaps in about April 858, and whether or not his warband had attacked Évreux and Bayeux, this does leave open the question as to whether he had really been involved in the second Scandinavian expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean as William of Jumièges much later claimed he was. In Chapter 4 I suggested that the second Scandinavian expedition to the Iberian Peninsula and into the Mediterranean likely originated in Aquitaine/the Loire, and it probably commenced in 858. The fleet that undertook it was possibly that originally led by Oskar although maybe now under different leadership. Yet it is not completely impossible that Bjørn (*Berno*) having left the Seine and Neustria sometime in 858 had eventually come to Aquitaine and maybe even joined forces with Oskar's (former?) fleet. Such a scenario would fit with the later Norman tradition of William of Jumièges that a *Bier Costa Ferrae* (Björn Járnsíða of later sagas) had accompanied Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Alstignus (*Hasting* it is usually said) to Iberia and the Mediterranean and that on his return after being shipwrecked in England he then went to Frisia where he died.[1] But neither Dudo's nor William of Jumièges's stories can be accorded much historical credence or veracity. Here we must simply and honestly admit that we really have no idea what the historical Bjørn/Berno did after 858.

After the siege of Oissel

Once Charles and Lothar II had abandoned the siege of Oissel at the end of September 858 the Northmen established on the island - whoever their leader might now have been - began to raid again in Neustria, between the Seine and the Loire.

It could well be that it was towards the end of the year that Bayeux and Évreux (both in Neustria) were attacked and Bishop Baltfrid of Bayeux killed, but as discussed above these attacks may possibly have been conducted earlier in the year by Bjørn as part of his 'bargain' with Charles the Bald. Whatever the truth, despairing of being protected by their king and magnates in late 858 or early 859:

[1] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, I. 10, pp. 26-27. For a discussion of *Bier Costa Ferrae* as told of by William of Jumièges see to start with E. Ashman Rowe, *Vikings in the West*, esp. pp. 65-68, 172.

> Vulgus promiscuum inter Sequanam et Ligerim inter se coniurans, aduersus Danos in Sequana consistentes fortiter resistit. Sed quia incaute sumpta est eorum coniuratio, a potentioribus nostris facile interficiuntur.[1]

Translated by Janet Nelson as:

> Some of the common people living between the Seine and the Loire formed a sworn association amongst themselves and fought bravely against the Danes on the Seine. But because their association had been made without due consideration, they were easily slain by our more powerful people.[2]

Or in Walther Vogel's excellent German translation as:

> Allerlei niederes Volk zwischen der Seine und Loire machte eine Beschwörung und leistete den Dänen, die an der Seine weilten, tapferen Wiederstand. Aber weil die Beschwörung dieser Leute in unbedachter Weise unternommen war, wurden sie von unseren Mächtigen mit Leichtigkeit niedergemacht.[3]

Some French scholars have taken this to mean that it was the Northmen who slew the peasants.[4] But Vogel,[5] closely followed by Coupland and Nelson,[6] have convincingly argued that it was indeed the Frankish magnates who slaughtered the common people because their association was a threat to the elite. According to Coupland,[7] Prudentius's phrase 'Sed quia incaute sumpta est eorum coniuratio, a potentioribus nostris facile interficiuntur' has 'the straightforward meaning' of, 'But because their conspiracy was rashly formed, they were easily killed by our magnates', which is a rendition of Vogel's earlier German translation.

The summer of 859 was a bad one for the Franks. The 'Danes' still on the Seine, that is those based on the island of Oissel, shifted their attention away from Neustria but continued to make raids on the other side of the Seine. They besieged the town of Beauvais and on 25 June[8] they

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[1] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 80.
[2] *AB* 859: trans. Nelson, p. 89.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 166-67.
[4] See for example F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 32 and n. 2; *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, ed. Grat *et al*, p. 80, n. 1 (following Lot).
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 166-69.
[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 49-50; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of Saint-Bertin*, p. 89, n. 1; *eadem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 194.
[7] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 50.
[8] Archbishop Hincmar refers in a letter to the measures necessary 'pro solvendo Belvacensis urbis obsidione', 'for the resolution of the siege of the town of Beauvais': Flodoard, *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*, eds. J. Heller and G. Waitz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 13 (Hanover 1881), pp. 405-599, at p. 509. A Beauvais obituary mentions the date of

killed Ermenfrid, the bishop of the city, 'at a certain villa'.[1] Two months later (probably in August) in a night attack they took and wasted the *civitas* of Noyon (dep. Oise) and captured Bishop Immo and other nobles, and then slew them 'on their march'.[2] On the Seine itself it was 'for fear of these same Danes' that the bones of Saints Denis, Rusticus and Eleutherius were taken to Nogent-sur-Seine in the Morvais district, where they were placed in reliquaries on 21 September.[3]

The activities of the pirate and mercenary Weland

If things were not bad enough, at the same time all this was going on and whilst Charles the Bald was still concerned with his struggles with his half-brother Louis the German in July 859 a new Scandinavian fleet arrived in Francia, it was in all likelihood under the leadership of a chieftain called Weland.[4]

After plundering the monastery of Saint-Valery at the mouth of the Somme[5] on 27 July the fleet similarly attacked the nearby abbey of Saint-Riquier (dep. Somme). This date is recorded in an epitaph for a brother of the abbey called Herirard who was killed by a Danish arrow.[6] Most of the community had managed to flee although they had not had the time to take the body of their patron with them. The story is told in the contemporary *Miracles of Saint Riquier* (*Miracula sancti Richarii*).[7] The monks fled in all directions[8] but eventually they all came together at a place called *Podervais*.[9] They returned to their abbey after a six month exile on 10 February 860.[10] The Northmen had plundered the abandoned abbey; 'one of the brothers later described the occasion as "quando etiam Dani rapuerunt omnia nostra"'.[11] Prudentius says the Northmen then attacked

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Ermenfrid's death: *Gallia christiana*, vol. 9, col. 698. I take both of these facts/references and the quotation from S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 50.

[1] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91.

[2] *Ibid*. Perhaps this was because as Janet Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 194, says, 'he attempted resistance or escape'.

[3] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91. For a lengthy discussion and analysis of all these events see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 33-35 and nn. 1-3, p. 36 and nn. 1-3. See also J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 11; *eadem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 194.

[4] See for example J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 9.

[5] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 90.

[6] *Carmina Centulensia*, *MGH*, *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, III, ed. L. Traube (Berlin, 1896), pp. 265-368, at no. 122, p. 345.

[7] Miracles of Saint Riquier: *Miracula sancti Richarii*, *AA*, *SS*, Aprilis III (Paris, 1866), pp. 447-61, at book II, chap. 1, §§ 1, 2, pp. 452-53.

[8] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 171, places their flight in August or September.

[9] Lot followed Vogel in offering an idea for the location of *Podevais*; perhaps it was Saint-Gervais on the Encre near Albert (dep. Somme, arr. Péronne): F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 38, n. 4; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 171. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 51, n. 215, maintains we do not know where *Podevais* was.

[10] *Carmina Centulensia*, *MGH*, *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, III, no. 122, p. 345; Miracles of Saint Riquier: *Miracula sancti Richarii*, book II, chap. 1, §§ 1, 2, pp. 452-53; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 38, n. 4; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 171 and n. 3.

[11] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 52; Miracles of Saint Riquier, *Miracula sancti Richarii*, book II, chap. 1, p. 453;

the town of Amiens and 'other places around it'.[1] It was noted earlier that on the basis of dating two letters from Lupus of Ferrières to Odo, the abbot of Corbie, to 858, in which it is mentioned that Odo had won a victory over the Northmen, Levillain, Lot and Vogel placed this success in 858. However, Coupland, Nelson and Bauduin are of the opinion that Odo's victory happened in 859 just after Weland's Northmen came to Amiens.[2]

At about the same time as Weland was attacking the monasteries of Saint-Valery and Saint-Riquier and the *civitas* of Amiens in Lothar II's realm: 'Others of them [the Danes] also attacked with the same fury the island in the Rhine called Betuwe,'[3] whilst at the start of the year 'the Danes' had 'ravaged the places beyond the Scheldt'.[4]

The very long and severe winter of 859-860 as reported by both Prudentius and in the *Annals of Fulda*[5] seems to have put an end to the attacks on Charles's kingdom. Weland's force probably overwintered somewhere on the Somme and the Seine-based Northmen no doubt returned to Oissel.

It is a surprising fact that in 860 we find no reports in any contemporary sources of any Scandinavian activities on the Seine. Coupland suggests: 'This presumably indicates that they did not carry out any spectacular raids, but should certainly not be taken to mean that the Seine was at peace throughout the year.'[6]

The Northmen based on the island of Oissel were as far as we can tell still there but what they did throughout the year is a mystery.[7] Whatever the case it was either in late 859 or more likely in early 860 that Charles had received an offer from Weland to expel or exterminate the Northmen still 'busy on the Seine'.[8] Or perhaps Charles had first approached Weland to try to buy his services in an effort to finally get rid of the Oissel Northmen.[9] Prudentius wrote:

Carmina Centulensia, *MGH*, *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, III, no. 85, p. 327.

[1] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, pp. 90-91. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 52: 'It was probably as a result of this raid that the priest Hunfrid fled the diocese for the parish of Meeffe (Liège), north of Namur. Hunfrid's move was authorised in a letter written by Bishop Hilmerad of Amiens to Franco of Liège on 8 March the following year'; here referencing *Epistola formata H. episcopi ad episcopum Tongrensem*, in *Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum historicorum, dogmaticorum, moralium amplissima collectio*, eds. E. Martène and U. Durand, 9 vols (Paris, 1724-33), vol. 1, cols 156-57.

[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 52: 'Soon after the attack on Amiens, the Vikings' advance was checked by a local force, doubtless mustered under the *lantweri*, which fought the Vikings near Corbie and reportedly inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy'; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 9; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 306 and n. 5.

[3] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91.

[4] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 80; trans. Nelson, p. 89. The Northmen who conducted these attacks in Lotharingia might or might not have had some connection with Weland and his men.

[5] *AB* 860 Grat, p. 82; trans. Nelson, p. 92, *AF* 860: ed. Kurze, p. 54; trans. Reuter, p. 46.

[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 52.

[7] Why had the Oissel-based Northmen refrained from further raids throughout 860?

[8] *AB* 860: ed. Grat, p. 82-83; trans. Nelson, p. 92.

[9] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 41 and n. 3.

> King Charles, deceived by the empty promises of the Danes on the Somme, ordered a tax to be levied on the treasures of the churches and on all the *mansi* and on traders - even very small-scale ones: even their houses and all their equipment were assessed so that the tribute could be levied on them. For the Danes had promised that if 3,000 lb of silver, weighed out under careful inspection, were handed over to them, they would turn and attack those Danes who were busy on the Seine and would either drive them away or kill them.[1]

This is probably referring to the situation in about February.[2] Then after mentioning some strange celestial events in early April Prudentius added: 'The Danes on the Somme, since the above-mentioned tribute was not paid to them, received hostages, and then sailed over to attack the Anglo-Saxons by whom, however, they were defeated and driven off. They then made for other parts (*alias partes petunt*)'.[3] So 'when it became apparent that the promised sum was going to take some considerable time to raise, the fleet, impatient for further loot, took hostages to keep Charles to his word and crossed the Channel'.[4] We might date this departure to about April although earlier in the year is certainly equally possible.[5] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* picks up their arrival and subsequent defeat in its first entry for 860:

> 860. Here King Æthelbald passed away, and his body lies at Sherbourne; and Æthelberht, his brother, succeeded to the entire kingdom, and he ruled it in good concord and in great tranquillity; And in his day a great ship-army came up and destroyed Winchester; and against the raiding-army fought Ealdorman Osric with Hampshire and Ealdorman

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[1] *AB* 860: ed. Grat, pp. 82-83; trans. Nelson, p. 92. Athough Weland's Danes had made promises this does not necessarily mean that they had made the first approach.

[2] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 41, n. 4, suggests this date and that there had been an 'armistice' on the Somme before spring. This is because according to the *Miracles of Saint-Riquier* the abbot and monks of this abbey had returned on 10 February, which they would not have done if they were still in fear of pagans.

[3] *AB* 860: ed. Grat, p. 83; trans. Nelson, p. 92.

[4] S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 3. In *Charles the Bald*, p. 52, S. Coupland says: 'When it became clear that a considerable time would be required to collect such a sum, the Northmen on the Somme put to sea and crossed the Channel.'

[5] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 41 and n. 6, says April. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 180, places their departure in May. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 53, would see the Scandinavians departing for England before the return of the monks, hence very early in the year. Prudentius clearly wrote many of his first entries for 860 in one go, possibly in about April, because the first entry for the year refers to the long hard winter from November to April. Coupland (*ibid.*) says: 'The order of Prudentius's account has misled previous scholars, who have inferred from the fact that the Vikings' departure was described after events of early April that the fleet did not put to sea until April or May. However, the entry in question also referred to the Scandinavians' arrival in England and their defeat by the Anglo-Saxons, and it was almost certainly the latter event which should be dated to April-May.'

Æthelwulf with Berkshire, and put the raiding-army to flight and had possession of the place of slaughter.[1]

I suggest that following such a defeat Weland's army did not stay in England, or at least not for very long.

There is no further mention of any Scandinavian presence or activity in England throughout the rest of 860, in 861, or indeed until 865 when the first contingent of the so-called 'Great Army' arrived.[2] Furthermore, Prudentius is quite explicit that after this defeat Weland's Danes who had come to England from the Somme had been 'driven off' and made for other parts or regions: *alias partes petunt*. The date of their departure has often been placed in late May.[3]

Where were these other parts? We cannot be sure,[4] but one possibility that has been proposed is that all or a part of Weland's fleet headed for the mouth of the river Yser and then using the navigable *golfe* which at that time still led much further inland they attacked the important twin abbeys of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer.[5]

The *Miracula sancti Bertini* tell us that they arrived *in 860* in many ships (*navium plurima*) 'in finibus Menapum sinum qui vocatur Iserae portus'. Trying to keep their movements secret the Northmen travelled by night[6] and arrived at the monastery of Saint-Bertin on the eve of Pentecoste, that is on 1 June according to Lot,[7] or 8 June according to Coupland.[8] But despite

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[1] *ASC* A 860, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 66, 68; *ASC* A, ed. Bately: '860, Her Ęþelbald cyng forþferde, 7 his lic liþ æt Sciraburnan, 7 feng Ęþelbrht to allum þam rice his broþur, 7 he hit heold on godre geþuærnesse 7 on micel(r)e sibsumnesse; 7 on his dæge cuom micel sciphere hand1b: up 7 abręcon Wintanceastre. 7 wiþ þone here gefuhton Osric aldorman mid Hamtunscire, 7 Ęþelwulf aldormon mid Bearrucscire, 7 þone here gefliemdon, 7 węlstowe gewald ahton.'

[2] Maybe in 864, see *ASC s.a.* 864.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 53-54, suggests April or May but only for part of Weland's fleet: 'Over in England, the army stormed Winchester, but when they were defeated by the combined forces of Hampshire and Berkshire, they left England in April or May 860 and "alias partes petunt."' But this dating is highly teleological because it already assumes that some or all of Weland's fleet went on to attack the twin monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer in early June.

[4] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 49, n. 1: 'Ces autres régions étaient, en tous cas, situées également dans les Iles britanniques […]. Peut-être les Danois allèrent-ils passer l'hiver 860-861 vers l'embouchure de la Tamise, dans les îles de Thanet ou de Sheppey, où ils avaient déjà hiverné en 853 [actually in 850-51] et 855.' I cannot agree with this. If the Danes had stayed on in England for *a year* after they had been defeated and 'driven off' in the spring of 860 we would probably have heard some mention of them in the *ASC*. Furthermore, as we shall see below, when Weland's fleet actually finally arrived on the Seine in 861 its numbers had grown; these reinforcements cannot have been found in England where at the time there were no other Northmen operating. It is theoretically conceivable that if Weland had overwintered on an island such as Thanet or Sheppey then these reinforcements had joined him there, from some unknown place of course; but if that had been the case then, once again, I think that the *ASC* would have mentioned it.

[5] *Miracula sancti Bertini*: *Libellus miraculorum sancti Bertini*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 509-16, at pp. 509-10.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 509. See also F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 42 and n. 3.

[7] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 42 and n. 6.

[8] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 53 and n. 232: 'The first day of the week was Sunday, so that "sabbato ebdomadis pentecostes" was the Saturday after Whitsun, not its eve ('vigilia').'

these precautions by the Northmen the monks had heard of their coming and most of them had fled.[1] To use Simon Coupland's words: 'Only four brothers had remained behind,[2] and their fate is recorded in detail by a contemporary hagiographer. All four were beaten and ridiculed, and three were dragged off to be enslaved. One of these refused to continue, however, and after beating him with their spear-butts the Vikings soon lost patience with him and put him to death.'[3]

Where did they go to then? Coupland suggests: 'The band then headed north from the abbey, towards the coast, where they presumably put to sea again.'[4] On the other hand Lot maintained that: 'Les Danois, après avoir pillé Saint-Omer et Saint-Bertin, ravagèrent le Ternois. Ils prirent sans doute son chef-lieu, la cité épiscopale de Térouane, qui n'était qu'à trois lieues au sud de ces abbayes.'[5] Lot explains his reasoning for this statement very ingeniously and somewhat cogently by referring to two short reports in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* in early 861. The first was written by Prudentius slightly before his death on 6 April 861. Immediately after mentioning the burning of Paris by the Seine-based Northmen in January[6] he says: 'Other Danish pirates also came to the district of Thérouanne and ravaged it.'[7] The second was written by Archbishop Hincmar immediately after he took over the writing of the so-called *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and says: 'The Danes had lately come back from the English and burned Thérouanne […]', although the original Latin is here somewhat more instructive: 'Dani qui pridem Morinum ciuitatem incenderant de Anglis reuertentes […].' Lot argued that when Prudentius wrote about the taking of Paris and the burning of Saint-Germain, which were important events, he realised that he had forgotten the incursion of the Danes in 860 into the Ternois, which was for him 'pas un fait très important', and so: 'L'association des idées lui a remis en mémoire un exploit d'autres Danois ("alii quoque Danorum"), et il l'a mis à la suite sans plus se soucier d'un anachronisme, qui, à ses yeux, était évidemment de mince importance.'[8] Then when Hincmar took over the writing of these annals he read what his predecessor had written about 860 and the beginning of 861, particularly regarding the

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[1] *Miracula sancti Bertini*, p. 509.
[2] The *Miracles* even tell us their names: Woradus, Winedbaldus, Gerwaldus and Regenhardus.
[3] S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 3; for more details see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 42-43; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 191-94.
[4] S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 3.
[5] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 43-44.
[6] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 84; trans. Nelson, p. 94: 'In January, the Danes burned Paris and with it the church of SS-Vincent the martyr and Germain the confessor.' For more details of this attack on Paris see below.
[7] *Ibid*. 'Alii quoque Danorum pyratae Taruanensem pagum adeunt et deuastant.'
[8] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 44, n. 1. He adds, 'Peut-être, cependant, aurait-il intercalé la chose à son rang, bien que cette préoccupation de stricte chronologie […] lui fût étrangère, mais il fut surpris par la mort […] le 6 avril de cette année 861'.

Northmen of the Somme going to England (in 860) and the devastation of the *pagus* of Thérouanne (under 861). Hincmar linked the two events, and so as not to repeat the same words he replaced Prudentius's 'Tarvanensum pagum adeunt et devastant' with an expression he believed equivalent: 'Morinum civitatem incenderant.'[1] This may seem a little convoluted but on first reading it does make a certain sense particularly because it is clear that the twin monasteries of Saint-Omer and Saint-Bertin were attacked in 860 (and not in 861),[2] and - far less convincingly perhaps - because it would have been strange as Lot observed[3] if the nearby 'capital' of the Ternois, Thérouanne, had not been touched at the same time. However, I am not completely convinced. Lot tried to explain away Hincmar's statement that it was Weland's fleet which had previously been in England which had attacked Thérouanne (*Morinum ciuitatem*) in early 861 before moving on to the Seine. As Coupland quite rightly says this 'underestimates not only the archbishop's intelligence, but also his knowledge of contemporary events', and that 'it is inconceivable that Hincmar's information about the Viking attacks of 860 and 861 derived solely from Prudentius's annals, as Lot implied'.[4] Prudentius's report of Danish pirates ravaging the district of Thérouanne (*Tarvanensum pagum*) must have been referring to events before his death on 6 April, hence wherever Weland's fleet might have been over the winter of 860-61 it had started the New Year with a raid in Flanders on its way to the Seine.

An alternative scenario is proposed by Simon Coupland. In his view it was 'a small band' or 'faction' of Weland's fleet which had attacked the twin monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer, after which it 'put to sea again' in mid-860.[5] He suggests that: 'This thesis is also supported by the *Miracula sancti Bertini,* which assert that the Northmen who raided the abbey had promised not to attack the West Frankish realm but then went back on their word.'[6] Who else could have made such a promise if not Weland? Yet having said this it will be remembered that there were no reported attacks along the Seine during the whole of 860 by the Oissel-based Northmen which is something of a mystery. It is, therefore, not completely out of the question that it was these Northmen who had promised Charles the Bald not to attack his realm but had gone back on their word and that at least some of them had conducted the attack on the

[1] *Ibid*., p. 44, n. 2.
[2] 861 was suggested by E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches*, vol. 2, pp. 26-27, and W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 181 and n.1, but F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 44 and n. 1, convincingly showed the impossibility of this.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 44 and n. 1.
[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 56.
[5] *Ibid*., pp. 53-54.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 54.

monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer, after which they went back to the Seine.[1] This scenario is at least as possible as Coupland's view that it was some of Weland's fleet from England that had been responsible for this incursion.

In Coupland's theory Weland's whole fleet 'returned to the Continent' in the early months of 861,[2] a fleet which 'by now' consisted 'of some two hundred ships'.[3] The statement that Weland's fleet 'returned to the Continent' seems to suggest that it had come from England, but elsewhere Coupland says: 'It is not clear where the main body of the fleet went between April-May 860 and the spring of 861.'[4] Furthermore, Coupland says that when Weland actually arrived on the Seine in 861 with over 200 ships[5] he now demanded the 'inflated price of five thousand pounds of silver, presumably because their [Weland's fleet's] numbers had grown in the interval',[6] or as Vogel originally earlier put it, 'offenbar weil sich Welands Heer verstärkt hatte'.[7]

Both Lot's and Coupland's theories are somewhat hazy in terms of chronology and Weland's possible movements. Lot recognised that Weland's fleet had gone to England but he makes no connection between it and those Northmen who had attacked the twin monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer. The Northmen responsible for all this were, as we might expect from him, once again 'une nouvelle bande de pirates'.[8] We are not told from where they had arrived, and after their attacks on the twin monasteries, and indeed on Thérouanne according to him: 'Ils s'etaient rembarqués avec leur butin.'[9] Yet again these Northmen simply disappear; as to where they then went afterwards, we are offered no ideas.

I shall offer some tentative thoughts on these matters shortly. But before this let us return to Archbishop Hincmar's reports. Hincmar wrote *sub anno* 861, 'The Danes had lately come back from the English and burned Thérouanne.[10] Under Weland's command, they now sailed up the

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[1] S. Coupland, *ibid*., says: 'That the raid [on Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer] was the work of a small group and not Weland's entire army is suggested by the fact that the raiders did not return to the Seine from St Bertin, but went elsewhere.' But we really do not know where they went 'elsewhere', and the idea that they did not return to the Seine is highly circular. It simply assumes that this raid was made by a part of Weland's fleet from England and that as Weland's 'whole fleet' did not return to the Seine until 861 then the Northmen responsible for the attacks on Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer must have gone on to join the main fleet somewhere, but not to the Seine.
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 53.
[3] *Ibid*., pp. 54, 56.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 54.
[5] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 85; trans. Nelson, p. 95.
[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 157.
[7] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 183.
[8] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 42.
[9] *Ibid*., p. 44.
[10] If Lot's interpretation as summarised above is correct (which I doubt) then this is Hincmar précising what Prudentius had written about events in 860 but placed wrongly under 861. The next words are clearly Hincmar's own telling of real events on the Seine in 861 itself.

Seine with over 200 ships, and besieged the fort built on the island of Oissel (*Oscellus*) with those Northmen inside it too', 'Dani qui pridem Morinum ciuitatem incenderant de Anglis reuertentes, duce Vuelando, cum ducentis et eo amplius nauibus per Sequanam ascendant et castellum in insula quae Oscellus dicitur a Normannis constructum et eosdem Normannos obsident'.[1] This arrival on the Seine can probably be dated to around May or June.[2] Putting to one side the mention of the 'burning' of Thérouanne, which has already been discussed, the most striking aspect of this report is the number of ships involved. 'Over 200 ships' indicates a very large fleet but when Weland's force had arrived on the Somme in July 859, which most historians would accept it did,[3] it just came according to the *Miracula sancti Richarii* in 'ships',[4] whilst Prudentius just says that it was 'Danes' who were responsible for these 'new attacks'.[5] According to the *Miracula sancti Bertini* the Northmen who arrived at Saint-Bertin in early June 860, whether or not they were part of Weland's fleet, just came in 'many ships' (*navium plurima*). Weland's defeat by the English in 860 had presumably depleted his strength, if so where and how had he managed to find enough reinforcements to bring his fleet up to 'over 200 ships' by 861? It certainly cannot have been in England following his defeat at the hands of the English - there were simply no other Northmen operating in England at this time.

Whether or not it was all or just part of Weland's force that had attacked the monastery of Saint-Bertin in early June 860, or whether his men had no involvement in this at all, Weland had not stayed on in England following his defeat in 860 or even returned there later.[6]

An intriguing although ultimately unverifiable answer to the question of reinforcements was provided by Jan de Vries. De Vries linked Weland with Frisian-based Northmen such as Rorik and Rodulf. He argued that it was Weland and Rodulf who together made a raid on Noordwijk (in the later county of Holland) in *c*.857 in which the priest (and later Saint) Jerome was killed along two 'counts' of Holland, followed by the raids on Betuwe/Dorestad and Utrecht;[7] and,

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[1] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, pp. 85-6; trans. Nelson, p. 95.
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 56, n. 279.
[3] See for example F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 38; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 51; *idem*, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 104; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 171; J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 189; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 91, n. 9.
[4] Miracles of Saint Riquier: *Miracula sancti Richarii*, book II, chap. 1, p. 453.
[5] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 90.
[6] Following F. Lot, P. Grierson, 'The *Gratia Dei Rex* coinage of Charles the Bald', p. 62, was wrong to say that Weland's Northmen 'spent the best part of a year in England'. The idea of a 'return' to England (in 861 no less) after attacks in the Ternois and before the arrival on the Seine was proposed by E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches*, vol. 2, p. 26, n. 2, but its falsity was demonstrated by both F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 44-45, n. 2, and W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 181-82, n. 3.
[7] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 178-79, 389. The attack on Noordwijk in 857 (or 856) if it ever happened at all is a very complex issue, for which see in the first instance P. J. Blok, 'Sint Jeroen', *Bijdragen voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde*, 4. 3 (1903), pp. 1-23; O. Oppermann, 'Over de wording der legende van Sint Jeroen', in *Opmerkingen over Hollandsche stadsrechten der XIIIe eeuw* (Utrecht, 1923), pp. 31-38. Similarly, W.

importantly here, that Weland had returned to Frisia after his defeat by the English in 860 and collected reinforcements there over the winter before going on to the Seine;[1] and indeed that when a fleet of sixty ships of reinforcements arrived on the Seine in 861 to support Weland's siege[2] this was probably led by Rodulf.[3]

Before continuing with Weland's poaching and mercenary career it will be instructive to examine a fascinating contemporary story told in the *Miracles of Saint Riquier* (*Miracula sancti Richarii*).[4]

In summary, the *Miracles of Saint Riquier* say that a certain *Ansleicus* (Aslak), who was of the Danish race and who had adopted the signs of the Christian faith and by the generosity of king Charles had become a companion of the palace (*contubernalis palatii*),[5] led an embassy to Charles of those Danes who had been forced to remain in England because of violent storms.[6]

There is little doubt that these Danes in England were Weland's from the Somme who had departed for England in early 860, and in fact the *Miracles of Saint Riquier* earlier mention their activities on the Somme in 859.[7] The Danish embassy had come according to the author with the intent of obtaining the goodwill of the king (Charles);[8] but whether the initiative for the embassy had come from the Danes or from Charles is to me at least rather unclear as indeed is from where *Ansleicus* had come: was it France or England?

Lot says that the hagiographer represents the 'pirates' in a deferential attitude, almost suppliant, which he says is quite improbable, and that *Ansleicus* had been sent to fetch an embassy from the Danes and that it is clear that the initiative for the negotiations came from the Frankish king.[9] Pierre Bauduin says: 'Aslak avait été envoyé par Charles le Chauve pour presser Weland, bloqué par une mer démontée selon les *Miracle*s, d'honorer ses engagements.'[10] This

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Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 159-60, suggested that this attack on Noordwijk was undertaken by the same Northmen who attacked Dorestad and Utrecht (but after not before), however these two attested attacks might or might not have been made by Sidroc's fleet after it had left the Seine.

[1] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 189, 391. I find this quite credible. Of course, following Vogel, de Vries places the attacks on the monastery at Saint-Omer and on Thérouanne in 861 before the move to the Seine, which Lot showed was highly unlikely; but collecting reinforcements in Frisia over the winter of 860-861 makes much more sense of the scant record than other scenarios involving an improbable year-long stay in England.

[2] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95.

[3] J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, p. 190.

[4] The story is also retold by the eleventh-century monk of Saint-Riquier Hariulf in the so-called *Chronicon centulense*; see *Chronique de l'abbaye de Saint Riquier (Ve siècle -1104)*, ed. F. Lot (Paris, 1894), p. 135.

[5] Miracles of Saint Riquier, *Miracula sancti Richarii*, book II, chap. 1, §16, p. 456: 'Quidam Ansleicus, de propagine Danorum progenitus, Christianitatis sumens insignia, contubernalis palatii domni Caroli regis piissimi munificentia effectus est.'

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*, book II. chap. 1, §§ 1, 2, pp. 452-53.

[8] *Ibid.*, book II, chap. 1, § 16, p. 456.

[9] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 46, n. 1,

[10] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 292.

may have been so but it is just an assumption. Was it that Aslak was sent by Charles as an 'intermédiare danois' from France to Weland in England? Or had he perhaps led the delegation of the Danes in England to King Charles? The *Miracles of Saint Riquier* do not explicitly tell us. However, although we do not know when and why Ansleicus had joined the king's entourage, that he was called a *contubernalis palatii* and was thus quite definitely a familiar of Charles does tend to the conclusion that he had been at Charles's court for some time.

Moving on, perhaps after meeting the king[1] the Danish embassy led by *Ansleicus* was returning with a favourable response and stopped at the monastery of Saint-Riquier on the Somme.[2] No doubt because he had received the *prima signatio*[3] Ansleicus was allowed to enter the church and whilst he (and others) was making a round of all the altars and saying his prayers another pagan member of the Danish embassy pushed by human curiosity entered the church but showed little reverence for this Christian place. The Danish embassy then returned to the coast[4] where the pagan Dane was struck down with a severe illness. Once he and his compatriots had reached their *castrum*[5] the sick Dane was on the point of dying. He and his compatriots looked in vain for the cause of his illness and they eventually resorted to consulting the Fates, or in a Scandinavian context perhaps casting lots/stones (*sortilege indogine vestigantes*), which revealed that his illness was due to the offence he had committed in the church of Saint-Riquier. He therefore promised that he would return to a correct life and stop spilling the blood of the Christians which is probably a reference to Weland's Danes slightly earlier activities on the Somme. He also pledged that he would have cut four *fila* (strings/chains) of silver and one of gold to the length of his own height, which he would send to the church of Saint-Riquier as a sign of his devotion and that he would place on each altar a candle and a dernier. He was miraculously soon relieved of his illness and in three days was able to finish his business. The business of this pagan Dane and the other Danes of the embassy, including of course Ansleicus, had probably been as Pierre Bauduin puts it 'exposer les nouvelles exigences de Weland', and doubtless to 'rapporter à ce dernier [Weland] la réponse du roi [Charles]'.[6]

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[1] We are told nothing of such a meeting but the embassy was returning with a positive answer so a face-to-face meeting may well have happened.
[2] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 48, n. 1, would have it that they were on their way to embark (implicitly for England) at Quentovic.
[3] For what *prima signatio* meant see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 292 and n. 2, and p. 372.
[4] Whether or not this was at Quentovic.
[5] It is not absolutely certain as Lot assumed that the Danish embassy returned to their/a *castrum* in England; they might have already returned to the Continent once better weather had allowed.
[6] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 292. S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 106: 'Although the outcome of Aslak's negotiations is not recorded in the Miracles of St Riquier, the return of Weland implies that he, too, fulfilled the task requested of him.'

I would accept the prevailing view that the embassy of this Dane Aslak (*Ansleicus*), accompanied by other pagan Danes from England, to King Charles must have happened sometime in 860-61.[1] But did this take place in 860 or 861? Both are possible but I tend to believe it happened at the earlier date.[2]

First, the *Miracles* say that the Danes in England (Weland's I think there can be no doubt) had been stuck there because of rough seas, and we should note in this connection Prudentius's comment that the winter of 859-60 until April had been particularly severe. The conventional opinion is that Weland left the Somme for England in about April 860 or perhaps even earlier in the year. His warband's 'destruction' of Winchester presumably happened relatively quickly thereafter and the defeat at the hands of the ealdormen Osric and Æthelwulf not too long after that.[3] After which Prudentius says 'they then made for other parts' (*alias partes petunt*). They had left England and gone elsewhere.

Whatever the Oissel Northmen may have been up to in 860 they started 861 with a bang. In January they returned to Paris and set fire to it along with the 'the church of SS-Vincent the martyr and Germain the confessor', that is the church of the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.[4] The church of Notre Dame and the abbey of Saint-Eloi were also both destroyed.[5] From Paris

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[1] S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 105-6; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 291-92; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 48, n. 1.

[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206, places Ansleicus's joining 'Charles's military household' and his embassy in 862, at about the time Weland and his family were baptised. I think we must place this theory to one side. There were no Northmen in England in 862 who Charles could 'recruit' as 'a further Viking warband'.

[3] It would help us a great deal if we could establish the date of King Æthelbald's death in 860 and thus the start of the reign of his brother and successor Æthelbert. Weland's incursion and subsequent defeat in England happened, according to the *ASC*, in Æthelbert's time, and after the death of Æthelbald. Some historians have placed Æthelbald's death in July 860. This is based on John of Worcester's *Chronicle* in which it is said King Æthelwulf died on 13 January 858, coupled with the *Annals of St Neots* (and indeed Asser's *Life of King Alfre*d and John of Worcester) where it is said that Æthelbald reigned for two and a half years - hence we get to July 860 for his death. If we look at the contemporary Frankish evidence (from where all these English annals and chronicles derived some of their statements), Prudentius tells us about Æthelwulf's marriage to Charles the Bald's young daughter Judith at Verberie on 1 October 856, and that immediately thereafter Æthelwulf and Judith sailed to Britain where Æthelwulf's 'kingdom lay'. In 858 he also says that 'Æthelwulf, king of the West Saxons, died. His son Æthelbald married his widow, Queen Judith'. This latter report is placed before the report of Bjørn meeting King Charles at Verberie, which we can place in late March/early April 858. Allowing for a delay in Prudentius receiving the news of Æthelwulf's death, a date of his death in perhaps January as John of Worcester later says is quite possible. Therefore, if we take 'two and a half years' at face value then it could well be that Æthelbald only died in the summer of 860 which would mean that Weland's raid into England and his subsequent defeat would have to have happened in the second half of the year by which time Æthelbert had taken over the kingship. This question deserves closer examination than we can give it here, but if these dates are correct it would mean that Weland's fleet only left England sometime in the second half of 860 which would certainly cast some doubt on the view that a part of his fleet had raided the monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer in early June.

[4] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 84; trans. Nelson, p. 94; Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *Miracula sancti Germani*, *AA, SS*, Maii VI (Antwerp, 1688), II. 10, p. 803; *Vita Droctovei abbatis Parisiensis*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH*, *SRM*, 3 (Hanover, 1896), pp. 535-43. c. 2, p. 537. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 55: 'Although the body of St Germanus had already been removed, most of the abbey's library perished in the flames.'

[5] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, nos. 312, 364, pp. 189-90, 312-15.

they moved further upriver and burned the town of Melun (dep. Seine-et-Marne)[1] whose walls had been partially dismantled by Archbishop Wenilo of Sens three years earlier.[2] They then returned to their Oissel base.

Sometime thereafter Weland's fleet finally arrived on the Seine and commenced a siege of the Northmen on Oissel, perhaps in about May.[3] But before it did so Weland had clearly upped his demanded hire fee. Charles was now expected to pay 5,000 pounds of silver rather than the previous 3,000 pounds, and Weland also demanded provisions in the form of a 'large amount of livestock and corn', no doubt needed to feed his men during the siege to come. In order to pay this higher fee, which was according to Hincmar agreed to by Charles 'so that the realm should not be looted',[4] 'Charles ordered a levy to be raised from his realm'.[5] As mentioned earlier this increased hire fee was as Vogel put it, 'offenbar weil sich Welands Heer verstärkt hatte', 'clearly because Weland's army had been strengthened'.[6]

Not long after the siege began[7] a new fleet of sixty ships arrived on the Seine and joined up with Weland's in besieging Oissel.[8] The siege dragged on for some months until eventually the

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[1] Letter of Lupus of Ferrières to Folcric, Prudentius's successor as bishop of Troyes: Loup de Ferrières, *Correspondanc*e, ed. Levillain, vol. 2, no. 119, p. 176. For an analysis of this letter see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 46, n. 3. The argument for placing the burning of Melun in early 861 and not during Weland's stay there over the following winter, as proposed for example by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 184-85, and K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 74, is most fully made by F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 46 and n. 3, p. 47, n. 2, p. 57, n. 1; an analysis followed by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 55, and J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 205.

[2] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 47, n. 2.

[3] Hincmar places Weland's arrival on the Seine immediately after events we can date to April 861; see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 49 and n. 2. It is not true as P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 112-13, suggests that, 'En 860, une flotte opérant dans la Somme, lassée d'attendre le *census* de 3 000 livres qui lui avait été promis pour marcher contre les Vikings de la Seine, exige des otages avant de passer en Angleterre d'où elle revient quelques mois plus tard pour exécuter l'opération prévue, moyennant un montant encore plus élevé'. The return of Weland's Northmen happened not a few months later but a year later, after they had spent the winter somewhere else. But, as we shall see, Bauduin is absolutely right to say (*ibid.*): 'L'alliance tournée contre Salomon de Bretagne, faite par Robert le Fort avec des Normands qui venaient d'évacuer la vallée de la Seine fut assortie d'un échange réciproque d'otages et du paiment d'une somme élevée par la partie franque.'

[4] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95. This is confirmed by Hildegar of Meaux's *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, chap. 126, p. 201. Hildegar adds that the gold as well as silver was paid over. Either Weland had threatened to make more raids if his demand for a higher fee was not agreed to, or this reference is to the food supplies demanded: if Weland's men did not have food they would have to make foraging raids in the vicinity.

[5] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95.

[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 183, my translation.

[7] It was probably while Charles was at Meung on the Loire where Robert the Strong and King Charles were finally reconciled (see *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95). Ferdinand Lot places this visit in May or June, Walther Vogel puts it in August, Janet Nelson in the 'summer', and Karl von Kalckstein in August or early September: see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 50, n. 3; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 183; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 196; K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 71. I would tend to date Charles's and Robert's meeting at Meung, and hence the approximate date of the arrival of the *new* fleet of Northmen on the Seine, to around June because Regino of Prüm in a rare correctly-dated report in his *Chronicle* describes a meeting between Charles and Robert at Compiègne in 861, a meeting which took place at the beginning of July: see Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 79; trans. S. Maclean, p. 138; F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 51, n. 2.

[8] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95. That these were new arrivals and not part of Weland's fleet, as suggested by J. Lair, *Les Normands dans l'île d'Oscelle*, pp. 23-25, and F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 51-52, was persuasively shown by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 183 and n. 3. J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*,

'besieged were forced by starvation, filth and general misery' to negotiate with Weland's besiegers. The outcome of this was that the Oissel Northmen agreed to pay-over 6,000 pounds of gold and silver to Weland - clearly their raids over the last years had been very lucrative![1]

Lot placed the end of this long siege[2] in October or November,[3] although for reasons that will be discussed below I tend to think it ended earlier, perhaps as early as August. Whatever the date the two sides then joined forces or made an alliance with each other (*sociantur*),[4] and together they left Oissel and sailed down the Seine to the sea (*per Sequanam usque ad mare descendunt*).[5]

Thus far Weland seems to have carried out his side of the bargain. He had removed the long-established and troublesome Oissel Northmen and both he and they had moved to the mouth of the Loire seemingly intent on departing.

But according to Hincmar 'they were prevented from putting out to sea by the winter now coming on'. 'So they split up according to their brotherhoods [*sodalitates*] into groups allocated to various ports, from the sea coast right up to Paris; Weland [*autem* = whereas/however] with his company [*cum sociis*] came up the Seine to the fort [*castrum*] of Melun. Former occupants of the besieged fort [*castellani*], with Weland's son, now occupied the monastery of St-Maur-des-Fossés [actually just *fossatis*].'[6]

Most likely Weland camped on an island below the town which itself had been burned the year before.[7] In Nelson's translation of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* just quoted she translates/interprets *castellani* as 'the former occupants of the besieged fort', that is those from Oissel; so too does Coupland.[8] In this they follow Walther Vogel and before him Jules Lair and

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p. 190, proposed that these reinforcements probably belonged to Rodulf, the notorious Frisian-based Dane. Unfortunately, I cannot explore this idea more here; but given what we know of Rodulf at this time it is not chronologically or contextually out of the question, both here and for the next year when *all* the Northmen left for the sea in late March: see S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 12-15.

[1] For the siege and following events see also Hildegar, *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, chaps. 126-31, pp. 201-3; *Hincmari Epistolae* no. 23, *Ad Carolum imperatorem*, *PL*, 126, cols. 153-54.

[2] Hildegar in his *Vita et miracula Sancti Faroniss*, chap.126, p. 201, called it an '*obsidione diutissima*'.

[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 54, n. 5.

[4] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, pp. 95-96. Actually, at this time the monastery of Fossés was not yet known as Saint-Maur and it was not so named in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*.

[7] See Loup de Ferrières, *Correspondanc*e, ed. Levillain, vol. 2, letter 119, p. 176, and also F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 46, n. 3, 52; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 57; *idem*, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 106.

[8] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 57. In *Charles the Bald*, p. 205, Janet Nelson repeats the same translation/interpretation, adding (n. 84) that her account follows Coupland's. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 158, says: 'The outcome of events in 861 was not as Charles intended. The defeated army from Oissel decided to make up for the loss of six thousand pounds of booty to their besiegers by attacking Meaux, and it was only after their entrapment at Isles-lès-Villenoy which eventually compelled them to leave the Seine in the spring of 862.'

Karl von Kalckstein, although the idea goes back to Ernst Dümmler.[1] Although nothing is sure Lot's rather different interpretation has some clear merits. This is that *castellani* means the inhabitants of a *castrum* or *castellum* which was not an episcopal seat (such as Melun), and that Weland's son had some of the inhabitants of Melun lodging with him in the monastery of Fossés because their town had been burned the year before,[2] and that the 'anciens compagnons de Sidroc et de Bjœrn [those from Oissel] campèrent entre Paris et l'embouchure de la Seine',[3] which might be supported by the fact that Hincmar first says that the Northmen 'split up according to their brotherhoods into groups allocated to various ports, from the sea coast right up to Paris'.

If the Oissel Northmen had gone with Weland's son to Fossés then who were those who were allocated to various ports between the sea and Paris? In regard to this it is very instructive to note that the monk Ermentarius, writing very shortly afterwards, in about 864, mentions the taking of Meaux and the ruin of Melun. Meaux he calls a *civitas* (*atque Melduorum capiunt civitates*) whereas he calls Melun a *castellum* (*Melidunensium devastant castellum*).[4] Also in the letter of Abbot Lupus to Bishop Folcric, already referenced in a note above, Lupus says: 'Nam cum ad quondam insulam Sequanae pagani crudelissimi pyratae applicuissent, quae sita est sub Melleduni [Melun] oppido, ab alias recens exusto et eorum viciniam nobis [...].'[5] Lupus is making a distinction between Weland's newly arrived pagans and another earlier group which had previously burned the town. These other and earlier Northmen were clearly those from Oissel who had burned Melun in early 861 before Weland had even arrived on the Seine.[6] But there is nothing in this letter to support Coupland's idea that 'the Scandinavians who had been on Oissel' had accompanied Weland's son to the monastery of Fossés.[7]

For what then happened over the Christmas and New Year period the best presentation remains that of Ferdinand Lot,[8] closely followed by that of Simon Coupland,[9] although they differ the one from the other on one or two points, as do I from both of them. But let us start with what Archbishop Hincmar wrote. To quote him in full:

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 184; J. Lair, *Les Normands dans l'île d'Oscelle*, p. 18; E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches*, vol. 1, p. 468; K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 74.
[2] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 53 and n. 2.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 53.
[4] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, p. 61.
[5] Loup de Ferrières, *Correspondanc*e, ed. Levillain, vol. 2, letter 119, p. 176.
[6] See F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 46, n. 3.
[7] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 57
[8] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 53-59 and notes.
[9] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 173-75.

Charles arrived at Senlis, where he waited, expecting the people to assemble there to him so that troops could be positioned along both banks of certain rivers, namely the Oise, Marne, and Seine, and defensive measures taken to stop the Northmen from coming up to plunder. But Charles now received news that a select force of Danes, picked from amongst those encamped at Fossés, was making for Meaux with a few ships. Charles made all speed in that direction with those men whom he had with him. But he could not catch up with them, because the bridges had been destroyed and the ships taken over by the Northmen. He therefore followed some indispensable advice and rebuilt the bridge across to the island of Trilbardou [*pontem as insulam secus Treiecttum* …],[1] thereby cutting the Northmen's access to the way down the river. He also assigned squadrons to guard both banks of the Marne. The Northmen, now tightly hemmed in by these moves, gave hostages chosen by Charles, and on his orders: the conditions were that they should return without any delay all captives they had taken since sailing up the Marne, and either, on some prearranged assembly-date, should withdraw from the Seine with the other Northmen, and seek the open sea, or, if the others would not withdraw with them, should unite with Charles's army to attack those who refused to go. Thus, when ten hostages had been given, they were allowed to return to their own people. About twenty days later Weland himself came to Charles and commended himself to him, while he and the men he had with him swore solemn oaths in their own way. Then he returned to the ships and with the whole Danish fleet sailed down the Seine to Jumièges, where they decided to repair their ships and await the Spring equinox. When the ships had been repaired, the Danes made for the open sea […].[2]

All this took place at the end of January and in early February 862.[3] Hincmar glosses over a few things in his long report. The city of Meaux was actually taken, plundered and burned by the Northmen from Fossés in late January 862 as reported at length by the bishop of Meaux at

[1] *AB* 862, ed. Grat, p. 88. Trilbardou (dep. Seine-et-Marne), or *Trajectius Bardulfi*, lies immediately west of Meaux still on the river Marne. This bridge was the progenitor of much of Charles the Bald's subsequent defensive bridge building. For the precise location of the bridge at Trilbardou (at Isles-lès-Villenoy) see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', nn. 1 and 2, pp. 56-57; followed by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 173. But see also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 187 and n. 3.
[2] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, pp. 88-89; trans. Nelson, p. 98.
[3] This dating is shown by a charter issued by Charles the Bald involving an exchange of lands in the Vexin. It is dated 31 January 862: 'Data pridie kalendas februarii, indictione X, anno XXII, regnant Karolo gloriosissimo rege. Actum ad Insulas super Matronae in expeditione hostili': *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 237, p. 28. For which see also F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 56, n. 2; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 187 and n. 3; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 173.

the time, Hildegar.[1] Hildegar wrote that Northmen who were at Fossés came in small boats (*parvis navibus*) up the Marne to Meaux. In a night attack they captured the town before midnight. The flames of the burning houses lit up the night sky, and the streets were full of the screams of the fighters and the fleeing. The town was completely plundered and in part burned down. The cloister of Saint-Faron was however spared, according to Hildegar by the intervention of their saint but perhaps because the Northmen had been paid off.

The first difficult issue in all this is the identity of the 'select force of Danes' from Fossés which had reached and plundered Meaux. It was when they were returning that Charles seems to have had a success: 'By stationing guards along the banks of the Marne and quickly rebuilding a barrage across the river behind the attackers, he blocked off their retreat and forced them to terms.'[2] But who were the Northmen from Fossés who were responsible for this attack on Meaux? Those who afterwards had to give hostages to King Charles, to return the captives they had taken, withdraw from the Seine and seek the open sea, and who had even engaged to join with Charles's army if the other Northmen did not leave with them. If the former Oissel-based Northmen had really accompanied Weland's son to Fossés, which I have already suggested is doubtful at best, then it may have been them. More likely it may have been part of Weland's son's group who we actually know were stationed at Fossés.

The attack on Meaux is somewhat suspicious. Writing very shortly after the event[3] in a 'vitriolic attack on Charles'[4] Bishop Hildegar blamed the Scandinavian attack on Meaux on the king and his men 'for allowing', as Janet Nelson puts it, 'the Seine basin, "the Paradise of his realm", to be laid waste'.[5] The failure of the siege of Oissel in 858 had even made 'the realm of the people of the Franks a most shameful laughing-stock', but the 'wintering of the Vikings upstream of Paris in 861-2 was the result of "treachery" [*infidelitas*]'.[6] Lot thought that Hildegar was perhaps 'sous le coup de l'émotion' in exaggerating the importance of the attack on Meaux 'sous l'empire d'une préoccupation bien légitime'.[7]

We now need to go back a little. Immediately after reporting the move of Weland and his son to Melun and Fossés respectively Hincmar says that 'Charles sent his son Louis, under the guardianship of Adalard, Queen Ermentrude's uncle, to protect the realm against the

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[1] Hildegar, *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, chaps 127-31, pp. 201-3. See also F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 56-57; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 206-7; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 185-87; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 57-58, 172-74.
[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 57, n. 1.
[4] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 205.
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] *Ibid*. For all this see Hildegar, *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, chaps 123, 125, 127, pp. 200-1.
[7] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 57, n. 1.

Northmen',[1] after which, if we follow Hincmar's order, Charles set out to make an attack on the lands of his nephew Charles of Provence.[2] Charles must have left in early to mid-September because he was already at Auxerre in Burgundy by 14 September and at Verzé near Mâcon on 11 October.[3] He was back at Ponthion in the Marne region by the second half of December where he celebrated Christmas.[4] If we follow Lot's dating of the end of the siege of Oissel to October or November then Weland and his son must have moved to Melun and Meaux a little after that, having failed to leave for the sea, and certainly after Charles had already left on his ultimately futile and fruitless foray into his nephew's lands in Burgundy. This explains why Lot says that 'Charles fit surveiller les Normands par son fils Louis, qu'il plaça sous la direction de l'oncle de la reine, Alard […]. Ce fut sans doute lui qui, en l'absence du roi, prit avec Weland les dispositions d'hivernage' of the Northmen; and that 'les mesures que les Francs durent prendre quand Weland remonta la Seine doivent […] être attribuées à Alard'.[5] I cannot agree with this interpretation because there is no reason to doubt the order of events given by Hincmar: notably that the 'dispositions' of the Northmen to the lower Seine and to Melun and Fossés happened *before* Charles appointed his son Louis and his guardian Adalard to defend his kingdom against the Northmen, after which he departed for Burgundy. Indeed, between these two reports Hincmar talks about his own activities - his presence at a synod held near Soissons.[6] If this is so then Weland's and his son's move upriver beyond Paris must have occurred in late August or early September, although I would agree with Janet Nelson that the 'quartering' of the 'Vikings at Fossés [...] could surely only have been done with Adalard's agreement'.[7]

But why had Charles (and Adalard?) directed Weland and his son to Melun and Fossés, both far upstream of Paris, when they had previously been established near the sea at the mouth of the Seine seemingly intent on leaving? At first sight it makes no sense.

When referring to Hincmar's statement in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* that the Northmen gathered at the mouth of the Seine had been 'prevented from putting out to sea by the winter now coming on' Janet Nelson says this: 'Now with "winter approaching", says Hincmar innocuously, instead of either leaving the Seine altogether, or settling down near the river-

[1] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 87; trans. Nelson, p. 96. Lot dedicated a whole article to Adalard, see F. Lot, 'Mélanges carolingiens : Note sur le sénéchal Alard', *Le Moyen Âge*, vol. 21 (1908), pp. 185-201, reprinted in *Recueil des Ttravaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 2 (1970), pp. 591-607.
[2] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 87; trans. Nelson, p. 96.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 54, nn. 2, 4.
[4] *Ibid.*; *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 87; trans. Nelson, p. 96.
[5] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 54 and n. 5.
[6] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, pp. 86-87; trans. Nelson, p. 96.
[7] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206.

mouth to await spring, the Vikings "split up into their brotherhoods" and came back *upstream* to winter [...].'[1] The use of the word 'innocuously' does seem to suggest that Nelson thinks that there was something else going on, something that Hincmar might have drawn a veil over, notably that Charles had actually induced or persuaded the Northmen to stay on and continue in his service. That this may be so is perhaps supported by her later statement that after the quartering of Weland and his son beyond Paris 'these warriors were in effect being recruited into Charles's service' and that this 'became quite explicit in summer 862 when Weland and his son agreed to be baptised'.[2]

Most historians would accept Hincmar's statement that it was bad weather that had prevented the Northmen from leaving (in about August or just after if my dating is correct), although Lot, after mentioning that it was the Northmen's fear of 'la mauvaise saison' that had caused them to remain on land, adds in rather typical fashion: 'Sans doute, aussi, ces bandes, sur lesquelles l'autorité d'un chef était temporaire, voulurent expérimenter si un prolongement de séjour ne pourrait leur valoir un supplément de profit.'[3] Whilst Karl von Kalckstein says that the Northmen used the approach of winter as an excuse/pretence (*Vorwand*) to stay on and of course to make more plundering raids.[4] 'You pays your money and you takes your choice.'

What about the capture and sack of Meaux in late January 862? Who had conducted it? In my opinion the only answer there can be is that it was undertaken by a part of Weland's son's brotherhood/s from Fossés - from where we know it originated - and it is difficult to imagine that Weland's son had not led it or at least approved of it.[5] After King Charles had come back from Burgundy in December he had eventually arrived at Senlis sometime towards the end of January 862.[6] But before this, just after Christmas 861 or in very early January 862, Charles had left Ponthion and gone to Soissons by way of Reims, where Hincmar was the archbishop. At Soissons he received news regarding his daughter Judith, the widow of the 'English' king Æthelbald. Earlier she had sold up her possessions in England and 'returned to her father [not necessarily physically] and was being kept at Senlis under his protection and royal and episcopal guardianship, with all the honour due to a queen'.[7] But whilst at Soissons Charles learnt that she had run off with Count Baldwin of Flanders at his instigation and with the consent

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[3] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 53.
[4] K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 74.
[5] Like Ferdinand Lot I do not think the 'former' Oissel Northmen were with Weland's son at Fossés.
[6] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 88; trans. Nelson, p. 98. F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', pp. 55-56.
[7] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, pp. 87-88; trans. Nelson, p. 97.

of her brother Louis. It was also there that he heard of the 'rebellion' of his son Louis.[1] This is not the place to explore all these events, but it was to Senlis where Judith had so recently been that Charles now went. His intention was according to Hincmar to collect the Frankish host there 'so that troops could be positioned along the banks of certain rivers, namely the Oise, Marne, and Seine, and defensive measures taken to stop the Northmen from coming up to plunder'.[2] It should be noted that this was all (immediately) before he heard of the 'Danes' from Fossés 'making for Meaux'.[3]

Why does this matter? Clearly if we are to place trust in Hincmar's testimony Charles was anticipating further Scandinavian attacks along these rivers. Why? Had they already made any raids? I think probably not.

Hildegar tells us that on their way to Meaux the Northmen from Fossés had plundered the area of Brie - between Fossés and Meaux.[4] This was probably the news Charles received shortly after arriving at Senlis. According to Hincmar 'Charles now received news that a select force of Danes, picked from amongst those encamped at Fossés, was making for Meaux with a few ships. Charles made all speed in that direction with those men whom he had with him',[5] and it is noticeable that the capture and plundering of Meaux itself is conspicuous by its absence in Hincmar's reporting. So why had Charles been concerned enough to summon the Frankish host to Senlis to protect the rivers where the Northmen were now based, particularly if, as Janet Nelson suggests, Weland and his son - who was now based at Fossés - had already accepted to be in Charles's 'service'. Could it be that Weland's son had decided to pursue his own ambitions, independent of his father's policy or commitments? It is not impossible and subsequent events might even support such a conjecture.

But when Charles had heard the news of the 'Danes' heading for Meaux he had immediately set out to confront them, not even waiting until his host had assembled. His tactic of rebuilding the bridge and thus barraging the river worked.[6] The leader responsible for the attack on Meaux, and I am more and more convinced this was likely Weland's son or one of his men, was by *force majeure* obliged to give hostages and make oaths before being allowed to leave.

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[1] *Ibid*.
[2] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 88; trans. Nelson, p. 98.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] Hildegar of Meaux, *Vita et miracula Sancti Faronis*, chap. 127, p. 201. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 184 and n. 2.
[5] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 88; trans. Nelson, p. 98.
[6] It was the success of this tactic that probably encouraged Charles to start building fortified bridges as a defence against future Scandinavian incursions.

Twenty days after this, which must have been in late February 862, 'Weland himself came to Charles and commended himself to him, whilst he and the men he had with him swore solemn oaths in their own way'.[1] Why had Weland and the men he had with him suddenly done this? He had previously earned a lot of money acting as a mercenary for Charles, and even considerably augmented his wealth from what he had got from the Oissel Northmen, and all this without having had to make any 'commendation' or give other 'oaths' to Charles. What had changed? As far as we can see Weland had had no involvement in the attack on Meaux,[2] although the 'men he had with him' might have had, particularly if these men had included his son, which I deem quite likely. Perhaps Weland's commendation to Charles was a sort of act of contrition for the actions of his son?[3] We can only resort to conjecture here, but which conjecture is most plausible?[4]

Let us examine the context. Whilst he was still at Soissons in January Charles had not only received news of the elopement of his daughter Judith with Count Baldwin, but also that his son Louis had consented to this, and that incited by Guntfrid and Gauzfrid Louis had 'abandoned his father's faithful men' - who in my opinion must surely have included Adalard - and 'fled by night with only a few men'. As a 'deserter now' he 'made his way to those who were inciting him to action'[5] - thus into Neustria.

A little later Guntfrid and Gauzfrid advised Louis to approach the Breton duke Salomon. Salomon gave him a strong contingent of Bretons and together they attacked Robert 'his father's faithful man, and laid waste the Anjou region and wherever else he could reach, with sword, fire and general devastation'.[6] But Robert, who had only recently returned to fidelity to King Charles,[7] had just hired the Scandinavian fleet that had come to Brittany and the Loire from the Seine (clearly Weland's as will be explored in the next chapter), and it was doubtless with the Northmen's help that 'Robert then attacked the Bretons as they were returning with enormous quantities of plunder, slew more than 200 of the Bretons' leading men and prised their booty from them;'[8] 'Louis made another attempt to fight back, but Robert drove him into flight and all his companions were scattered while he himself only just managed to escape'.[9]

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[1] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 98.
[2] For this opinion see for example F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 57; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 58.
[3] Even an early *Monopoly* 'Get out of jail free card', in French a 'Sortir de prison' card?
[4] In personal communication on this point P. Bauduin says he finds the suggestion of Weland's commendation to Charles possibly being an act of contrition 'surprenant'; but see the context explored below.
[5] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 88; trans. Nelson, p. 97.
[6] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 90; trans. Nelson, p. 99. All these events are examined more in the next chapter.
[7] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95.
[8] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 90; trans. Nelson, p. 99.
[9] *Ibid*.

Although following his brother Charles the Young's example Louis had married 'at the beginning of Lent' (which must have been about the beginning of March given that Easter fell on 18 April in 862) against his father's will,[1] which was 'a serious threat to' Charles's 'authority',[2] later in the year Louis 'who had recently defected from his father, returned to him and asked forgiveness from him and from the bishops too for his excesses' and 'bound himself by most strict and solemn oaths to be loyal to his father in future'.[3] As part of this reconciliation Charles granted Louis 'the county of Meaux and the abbacy of St-Crispin, and ordered him to come to him in person from Neustria along with his wife'.[4]

Finally, regarding the earlier statement that the attack on Meaux was perhaps suspicious this is based on Janet Nelson's views. With the foregoing context in mind, she says: 'In January Charles was faced with Louis the Stammerer's revolt. Louis's later connection with Meaux and the peculiar ferocity of Bishop Hildegar's verbal attack on Charles soon afterwards, evoke the suspicion that the bishop was at least a sympathiser with Louis. In that case, if Charles did not actually let the Fossés Vikings loose on Meaux, their activities there would not wholly have displeased him.'[5] Elsewhere she says: 'Bishop Hildegar of Meaux may have been a supporter of Louis's rebellion; and Charles the Bald may therefore have colluded in the Viking attack on Meaux [...]. This would explain the strong criticism of Charles in Hildegar's *Vita Faronis*.'[6]

This theory is appealing and even cogent but it is not completely convincing. The prime difficulty with such an interpretation is that Hincmar says that after hearing at Soissons of Judith's elopement and Louis's revolt Charles had set off for Senlis[7] 'where he waited, expecting the people to assemble there to him so that troops could be positioned along both banks of certain rivers, namely the Oise, Marne, and Seine, and defensive measures taken to stop the Northmen from coming up to plunder'. After this Hincmar tells the story of Charles receiving the news of 'Danes' heading for Meaux and how he had reacted and cut them off and hemmed them in, which had resulted in the Danes responsible having to gives hostages and oaths, twenty days after which Weland commended himself to King Charles.[8]

Unless Hincmar was engaging in some sort of elaborate cover-up of Charles's 'collusion' with the Fossés Northmen (perhaps under Weland's son) to attack Meaux it appears rather

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[1] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, pp. 90-91; trans. Nelson, p. 100.
[2] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 100, n. 13.
[3] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 92; trans. Nelson, p. 101.
[4] *Ibid*. Louis was obviously still in Neustria and this reconciliation must have been made by intermediaries.
[5] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206.
[6] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 101, n. 20.
[7] Senlis was where Judith had recently been held.
[8] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 98. As quoted more fully above.

difficult to reconcile this testimony with any collusion or conspiracy theory,[1] although it may well be that the attack on Meaux 'would not have wholly displeased Charles'.[2]

But Charles the Bald like his father before him was often willing to reconcile with his disobedient and rebellious sons, as witnessed later in this very year by his reconciliation with the fifteen-year-old Louis the Stammerer.[3] Maybe Weland's son had also been disobedient but after his entrapment at Charles's hands following his attack on Meaux his father had asked for forgiveness from the king and it was in this context that Weland had quickly commended himself to Charles, an event which is otherwise rather hard to understand. Indeed, after Weland had successfully carried out his 'mercenary' duties by ridding Oissel of the Northmen ensconced there, and even perhaps being rehired by Charles to protect the upper Seine whilst the king had been in Burgundy at the end of 861, why had Weland then had to commend himself to Charles in February, a thing he had not hitherto had to do? There is no cogent answer to this question other than that Weland needed to reaffirm his loyalty in the service of the king.[4] But it may too have been that it was at the time of his commendation that Weland had not only agreed to leave the Seine, which he did shortly thereafter, but had also agreed to direct himself to Brittany and the Loire where Charles's enemy Salomon was causing problems and to whom his son Louis had recently fled, and with whom he soon joined forces. I shall discuss these things more later. In my view Pierre Bauduin is absolutely right to say regarding the alliance of Weland and Charles the Bald, 'L'alliance tournée contre Salomon de Bretagne, faite par Robert le Fort avec des Normands qui venaient d'évacuer la vallée de la Seine fut assortie d'un échange réciproque d'otages et du paiement d'une somme élevée par la partie franque'.[5]

To summarise a little: whatever the reason for Weland's commendation what we do know is that he then 'returned to the ships and with the whole Danish fleet sailed down the Seine to Jumièges, where they decided to repair their ships and await the Spring equinox. When the

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[1] If Hincmar had decided to engage in a cover-up when he came to write up these events then the actual course of events may have proceeded somewhat as follows: Having heard of his son Louis's revolt Charles left Soissons for Senlis, where also his daughter Judith had just been. Maybe he even already suspected Bishop Hildegar of some involvement in or sympathy for Louis's revolt. On arriving at Senlis he arranged with his reliable mercenary Weland and/or his son at Fossés to attack Hildegar's city of Meaux. Then, after the burning and pillage of Meaux, which Hincmar does not actually mention, Charles had engaged in some play-acting, which involved the Fossés Danes supposedly having to give hostages and commit to leave the Seine with all the other Northmen, and if they did not then they were to enter into Charles's service in his army and attack those who had refused to leave. Thereafter, Weland had commended himself to Charles, and he and 'his men' had sworn oaths, which in the collusion/cover-up scenario might have been as a further recognition of Weland's reliability and Charles's gratitude? Such a scenario is rather too convoluted to be true.

[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206.

[3] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 92; trans. Nelson, p. 101.

[4] Hence my tentative idea of an 'act of contrition' mentioned earlier.

[5] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 113.

ships had been repaired, the Danes made for the open sea, and split up into several flotillas which sailed off in different directions according to their various choices. Most of them made for the Bretons, who live in Neustria with Salomon as chief'.[1]

Before we examine the events in Brittany and along the Loire thereafter what can we say about the other flotillas whose leaders had chosen not to head in this direction?

At least one of these flotillas seems to have headed northwards, back to the North Sea. Around Easter of an undated year, but which must have been 862,[2] the monks of the monastery of Saint-Riquier on the Somme had a new alert about the presence of Northmen along the coast and had fled to near Encre.[3] According to Lot these Northmen must have been one of the groups which had left the Seine at the end of March and 'passa en vue des côtes du Ponthieu', and that it was this particular fleet or flotilla that had caused the monks of Saint-Riquier to flee.[4] I would totally agree with this.

In conclusion regarding all the analysis in this chapter, and without wanting to repeat it all, what we can say is that a very significant conglomerate Scandinavian fleet, with a chieftain called Weland perhaps initially being its overall leader, arrived in early 862 in southern Brittany/the lower Loire from the Seine. It was a fleet that had clear earlier connections with England and very likely Frisia. It is thus a very interesting and unambiguous example of the theme of this thesis that all the Northmen who at one time or another operated in Aquitaine (writ large) were connected with elsewhere in Europe, and as will be examined in the next chapter their subsequent activities in Aquitaine over the course of the next few years, perhaps the zenith of the Northmen's activities in the region, just reinforces this conclusion.

[1] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, pp. 98-99.
[2] Easter fell on 18 April in 862.
[3] See Miracles of Saint Riquier: *Miracula sancti Richarii*, book II, chap. 1, § 12, pp. 455-56.
[4] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 62, n. 1.

Chapter 6

FROM THE LOIRE TO AQUITAINE: 862-865

The previous chapter was required for this study because it establishes the very clear connection or link between a large force of Northmen led by an adept mercenary called Weland, who had likely come from or via Frisia and who had operated in the north of Francia and in England, and his fleet's subsequent activities on the Loire and in Aquitaine.

This chapter examines in great detail what the Northmen who had come from the Seine in 862 plus those who had returned from 'Spain' did on the Loire and in more southerly Aquitaine over the next few years. This includes not only their attack on Poitiers in late 863 but also the long-distance raid to Clermont and the quick raid to and siege of Toulouse with Pippin II of Aquitaine in tow, both in early 864. Mention is also made of the chieftain *Maurus* in 863 and his apparent successor Sigfrid who had likely made the raid to Clermont. After this attack Sigfrid went back to his base on the Charente by late 864 or early 865 and his last fight in this area is also explored. What will be demonstrated, or at least argued, is that all these raids were undertaken from the Loire by parts of these two groups and not by some other unidentified Northmen come from 'we know not where', to use Lot's expression.

Arrivals and first activities

As we have seen, in late March 862 all the Northmen on the Seine finally left for the sea. The majority 'made for the Bretons, who live in Neustria with Salomon as chief; and these Danes were joined by the ones who had been in Spain'.[1] Hincmar immediately tells what had been happening on the Loire and what then followed:

> Salomon hired twelve Danish ships for an agreed fee, to use against Robert. These Robert captured on the river Loire and slew every man in the fleet, except for a few who fled into hiding. Robert, unable now to put up with Salomon any longer, made an alliance against Salomon with the Northmen who had just left the Seine, before Salomon could ally with them against him. Hostages were exchanged, and Robert paid them 6,000 lb of silver.[2]

[1] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.
[2] *Ibid*.

The Northmen who according to Hincmar had returned from Spain may have done so in late 861,[1] but by early 862 they were certainly back in southern Brittany/the lower Loire. The date when Salomon hired twelve ships from them is not quite clear,[2] nor is the place where or time when Robert the Strong had captured this small flotilla and killed the crews except for just a few who had managed to escape and go into hiding. In reporting these events Hincmar groups them all together. This is probably more a reflection of when he had heard of them, or that he had decided to write up a number of these events *en bloc*, rather than following any strict chronology. Thus, Salomon's hiring of twelve shiploads and Robert's subsequent capture of this flotilla could well have occurred in March/April 862 but I think it may well have happened or started a little earlier.[3] Furthermore, it is very unlikely that the twelve ships hired by Salomon comprised the totality of those who had returned from Spain. If they had been we might imagine that Hincmar would have written something to the effect that Salomon had hired the Northmen who had been in Spain and not just twelve shiploads of them.

It was likely the presence or actions of Salomon's Bretons combined with some of the Northmen who had returned from Spain which caused the move of the monks of Saint-Philibert from Cunault to Messais in Poitou on 1 May 862,[4] and at about the same time prompted the move of the community of the abbey of Saint-Maur at Glanfeuil first to Échemiré (dep. Maine-et-Loire) and then to Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe (dep. Orne) where they stayed for a year and a half before moving to Burgundy.[5]

Neither of the two groups of Northmen that had arrived on the lower Loire in early 862 had yet penetrated as far as Tours on the upper Loire, but it was probably the presence and actions of the Bretons and their Scandinavian mercenaries that was behind Charles the Bald's granting

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[1] I would not even exclude a little earlier than this.

[2] That Salomon had hired some of the ships of the Northmen who had recently returned from Spain is clear from the context and from the chronology; for which opinion see amongst many others W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 190; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 473; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 99, n 8; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 59; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 369; K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 77.

[3] We probably should not place too much store in the fact that in his 'annals' it was after this that Hincmar added the comment that Louis the Stammerer had married against his father's will 'at the beginning of Lent', hence probably in early March. This is also placed after the arrival of the Seine Northmen, which must have happened at the earliest a little after the end of March, and indeed he even placed this after Weland's baptism, which, as will be shown, doubtless took place at Tours around the end of April. See F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 478, n. 2, for a discussion of this point.

[4] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*, ed. Poupardin, p. 62; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 159, pp. 416-19. See also I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 78.

[5] Odo of Glanfeuil: *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri sive restauratione monasterii Glannafoliensis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 461-72, at chap. 13, p. 471. This story was later borrowed by the *Annales qui dicuntur Rainaldi archidiaconi sancti Mauricii Andegavensis*, ed. L. Halphen, *Annales angevines et vendômoises*, p. 82. This 'flight' of the community of Saint-Maur and its dating is discussed in much more detail in Appendix 2.

the canons of Saint-Martin at Tours a *cella* at Léré (dep. Cher, arr. Bourges). The charter was issued on 24 April,[1] when Charles was at Tours, 'because of the very cruel persecution of the Northmen and the Bretons' (*Normannorum seu Britonum*),[2] although the community did not actually move to Léré until later.[3] As Lot says: 'A cette date (24 Avril), on redoutait à Tours les effets de l'alliance de Salomon avec les païens,'[4] and elsewhere: 'ce sont les Normands d'Espagne, mêlés aux Bretons, que redoute saint-Martin de Tours, le 24 Avril'.[5]

Having left the Seine in late March the majority of the Scandinavian flotillas had probably arrived in southern Brittany/the lower Loire in early April,[6] when Robert the Strong immediately hired them for the enormous fee of 6,000 pounds of silver,[7] which involved an exchange of hostages, 'before Salomon could ally with them against him'.[8]

If Robert's capture and destruction of the twelve Scandinavian ships from Spain that Salomon had hired had taken place earlier, which I think is very clear, then the fear that the Northmen from the Seine might ally with those returned from Spain must indicate that those who had returned from Spain had amounted to more than the twelve shiploads Robert had captured.

But how could Robert have afforded and gathered such an amount? In 858 when King Charles had paid the ransom for abbot Louis of Saint-Denis, who had been captured along with

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[1] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 239, pp. 32-41. For the dating to 24 April and not 23 April compare F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 477, n. 2; Tessier, *ibid*., pp. 34-35; *La pancarte noire de Saint-Martin de Tours, brulée en 1793, restituée d'après les textes imprimés*, ed. É. Mabille (Tours, 1866), ed. Mabille, no. XIV, p. 65.
[2] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 239, pp. 32-41.
[3] At a synod held at Pîtres in June 862 the earlier grant of Léré to the community of Saint-Martin of Tours was confirmed by the assembled bishops at the request of Bishop Herard of Tours, in which it is said that Léré was a place to where the community could flee if the incursion of the 'above mentioned pagans' on the Loire should reach their community: see *Privilegium Sancti Martini Turonensis*, *Concilium in loco qui dicitur Pistis*, ed. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum collectio*, vol. 15, cols. 664-65; *Die Konzilien*, ed. W. Hartmann, pp. 118-20. Earlier in this *Privilegium* the presence of 'perfida gente Normannorum' on the Loire was mentioned (using language taken from the *Privilegium* for Saint-Martin at Tours issued by the synod held at Tusey-sur-Meuse in November 860). These Northmen might well have been those who had returned from Spain, but it is equally possible that Weland's Northmen were meant - or both. As will be discussed more later, Weland and his family were almost certainly baptised at Tours in late April or in very early May in the presence of Charles the Bald. Bishop Herard of Tours was no doubt also there at the time (see for example *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, nos. 239, 240, pp. 32-41, 41ff), and he could well have administered this baptism. Perhaps Bishop Herard, who made the request for the confirmation of the ownership of the *cella* of Léré at Pîtres in June on behalf of the canons of Saint-Martin, feared that Weland's Northmen would turn out to be perfidious? Clearly no Northmen had yet attacked Tours by June 862 but the fear that they might do so was certainly there. This synod at Pîtres is also mentioned by Hincmar who attended it, see *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 91; trans. Nelson, p. 100. Lot placed the synod of Pîtres/Soissons in 'about August' (*ibid*., p. 479, n. 2).
[4] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 477.
[5] *Ibid*., p. 477-78, n. 3.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] When primarily discussing the 'tribute' paid to the Northmen in 877, F. Lot, 'Les tributs aux Normands et l'Église de France au IXe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 85 (1924), pp. 58-78, argued, not very convincingly in my view, that this tribute of 6,000 pounds of silver was not really so significant.
[8] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

his half-brother Gauzlin, he had to 'drain dry' many church treasuries in his whole realm,[1] but he still needed to find more from his own resources and from 'all the bishops, abbots, counts and other powerful men',[2] but in this case the total for Louis's ransom amounted to 688 pounds of gold and 3,250 pounds of silver[3] compared to the 6,000 pounds of silver supposedly paid or agreed to be paid by Robert. Robert's payment can also be compared to the original 3,000 pounds of silver demanded by Weland in 860 to help Charles remove the other Northmen from the island of Oissel. To collect this Charles had needed time and Weland's fleet went away to England whilst he collected it. When Weland returned in 861 the price had risen to 5,000 pounds of silver plus provisions of cattle and corn, and Charles needed yet more time to collect a levy on the treasures of the churches of his realm and 'on all the *mansi* and on traders - even very small scale ones: even their houses and all their equipment were assessed so that the tribute could be levied on them',[4] after which Charles made another 'levy to be raided from his realm to bring in 5,000 lb of silver and a large amount of livestock and corn, so that the realm should not be looted'.[5] How therefore could it be that Robert's payment of 6,000 pounds of silver to the same Northmen whom Charles had hired at such great expense the year before was, as Janet Nelson puts it, a 'private payment, rather than a royally-organised tribute'?[6] It is to be doubted that Robert would have been able or even willing to collect and pay such an enormous sum in such a short period of time. If 6,000 pounds of silver was really paid by Robert then it could well have been with the assent or even at the instigation of Charles.[7] If so then what had been demanded by Robert/Charles in return? In 861 the payment to Weland had been made to remove the Oissel Northmen and then to leave the Seine without any further looting of Charles's realm. This time it was quite clearly to fight Salomon and his Bretons and probably also to counter

[1] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 77; trans. Nelson, p. 86.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] For Louis's ransom see F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 20, n. 2; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 163; E. Joranson, *The Danegeld in France,* p. 186, n. 12; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 161; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 86, n. 7. Gauzlin's ransom was paid separately by the church of Reims where he had become a monk.
[4] *AB* 860: ed. Grat, p. 83; trans. Nelson, p. 92.
[5] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95.
[6] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 99, n. 9.
[7] In F. Lot's opinion ('La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 477) the payment of this large sum would have to have been at the expense of all the populations/peoples of Neustria, but was made 'avec l'assentiment evident de Charles le Chauve'. Referring to von Kalckstein's book *Robert der Tapfere* (at p. 77), Lot (*ibid*., pp. 477-78, n. 3) says that von Kalckstein 's'imagine que pour acheter les Normands, Robert avait engagé ses fiefs et ses possessions. Plaisante hypothèse !' and in the same dismissive and sarcastic tone he adds that Édouard Favre (cf. *Eudes*, pp. 4-5) found that 'cette somme donne une haute idée des richesses dont il pouvait disposer'. P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 370, quite rightly says: 'On ignore comment le prélèvement fut opéré, mais dans l'hypothèse, la plus probable, d'une taxation publique pour un montant aussi élevé, l'assentiment du roi […] ne paraît pas devoir être mis en doute, quand bien même l'initiative de l'accord serait revenue à Robert le Fort.'

Charles's young son Louis the Stammerer who had rebelled against his father in January and fled to Neustria and sought Salomon's help.

Yet were the Northmen ever really paid the full amount promised by Robert? I tend to agree with Philip Grierson who says:

> Robert the Strong, faced with the possibility of a party of the Seine Vikings, bought off by the king in 861,[1] joining forces with Duke Salomon of Brittany, found it easier to take them into his pay. For a consideration of 6,000 lbs of silver they agreed to attack the Bretons, and Robert, naturally unable to produce such a sum at a moment's notice, gave hostages as a guarantee while it was being raised. How it was raised, or even whether it had all eventually to be raised and paid at all, we do not know. Certainly, Salomon was compelled to submit, which shows that the Vikings carried out their side of the bargain.[2]

Grierson is quite right to highlight that Robert and the Northmen exchanged hostages. Why would this have been necessary if 6,000 pounds of silver had been paid over at the time? The hostages were obviously required so that both sides had an incentive to carry out their side of the bargain.

But Grierson adds that 'the fact that the chronicler makes so little of it [the payment] suggests that Robert managed to collect whatever sum he eventually found necessary within his "duchy" of Neustria and without any recourse to a general levy which he would have had no authority to raise on his own'.[3] This is more debatable. King Charles could have given his assent and helped collect at least some of whatever payment was eventually paid. If so, and as I suggest below, whatever sum was ultimately paid might have been handed over when Weland and his family were baptised slightly later.

After telling of Weland and his family's baptism, which probably happened at Tours in about late April, Hincmar says:

> Then Louis, son of King Charles, took the advice of Guntfrid and Gauzfrid, and approached Salomon. He was given a strong contingent of Bretons, and with these he attacked Robert, his father's faithful man, and laid waste the Anjou region and wherever else he could reach, with sword, fire and general devastation. Robert then attacked the

[1] They were not really 'bought off' but more hired.
[2] P. Grierson, 'The *Gratia Dei Rex* coinage of Charles the Bald', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald. Court and Kingdom*, p. 62.
[3] *Ibid.*

> Bretons as they were returning with enormous quantities of plunder, slew more than 200 of the Bretons' leading men and prised their booty from them. Louis made another attempt to fight back, but Robert drove him into flight and all his companions were scattered while he himself only just managed to get away.[1]

If we are to attempt to date these events more precisely, they likely happened in May because after the clearly retrospective mention of Charles the Young's and Louis the Stammerer's marriages at the beginning of Lent Hincmar immediately shifts to a discussion of the assembly Charles called to Pîtres on 'about 1 June'.[2]

Robert's victory over the young Louis the Stammerer and his Breton force as they were returning from devastating Anjou was very likely accomplished with the assistance of the Northmen whom Robert had so recently hired for such a high fee.[3] That this was the case is also somewhat supported by the fact that before reporting these events, and immediately after mentioning the agreement to pay 6,000 pounds of silver, Hincmar says: 'Weland with his wife and sons came to Charles, and he and his family became Christians.'[4] It is almost certain that Weland's and his family's baptism took place around the end of April, or perhaps in very early May, at Tours on the Loire,[5] to where Charles had rushed once all the Northmen had left the Seine with the obvious intention of confronting both the Bretons and his rebellious son Louis. It is in my opinion highly likely that this baptism had been required by Charles as part of his assent for the payment of the 6,000 pounds of silver hire fee (or whatever amount that was really eventually paid) to the Northmen recently agreed to by Robert the Strong.

But who was in overall charge of the Northmen who had left the Seine in late March 862 and who were subsequently hired by Robert the Strong on the Loire to fight the Bretons and Louis the Stammerer?

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[1] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 90; trans. Nelson, p. 99.
[2] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 91; trans. Nelson, p. 100.
[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 478, says that 'il n'apparait pas que les Normands de la Seine aient prêté à Robert un secours bien efficace, mais, vu les circonstances, leur simple neutralité était déjà précieuse'. I find it difficult to follow this view; 6,000 pounds of silver seems rather an extravagant sum to pay the Northmen for their simple neutrality. My view is more in accord with that of P. Grierson ('The *Gratia Dei Rex* Coinage', p. 62), who, as already mentioned, rightly says that Robert had hired the Northmen 'to attack the Bretons' and 'the Vikings carried out their side of the bargain', and W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 191, who says that Robert had hired the Vikings from the Seine and turned them against the Breton Salomon.
[4] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 90; trans. Nelson, p. 99.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 192. Charles's presence at Tours in late April is attested in various charters; see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, nos. 239 and 240, pp. 32-41, 41ff, dated 24 and 26 April respectively. By 9 May Charles was at Quierzy (see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 241). F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 476-77, mentions Charles presence at Tours but does not link it with the baptism of Weland and his family.

This leader can only have been Weland. Referring to Jules Lair's belief that Weland had left the Seine with his fleet,[1] Ferdinand Lot, who was always inclined as quickly as humanly possible to dispose of named Scandinavian chieftains and replace them with unnamed leaders of 'new bands' or 'new arrivals', wrote: 'Rien n'autorise à croire, comme semble le faire M. Lair [...], que Weland s'embarqua, alla à l'embouchure de la Loire et revint seulement alors trouver le roi [Charles at Tours at the end of April]. Weland a certainement conduit la flotte danoise jusqu'à la mer, mais il ne s'est pas embarqué, puisqu'il voulait prendre pied en France. Quand ses compatriotes eurent fait voile, il rejoignit Charles.'[2]

I strongly but respectfully disagree. In fact, it is probably the other way around: there is nothing at all to authorise us to believe that Weland had not left with his fleet and there is not a shred of evidence in the record to suggest that he had ever wanted to 'prendre pied en France'.[3]

Why would Weland who had benefitted so richly from his mercenary services for Charles have suddenly decided to let his fleet sail off without him and stay just with his family with Charles? His fleet was the basis of his power and fortune, without it he was nothing and he would have had nothing further to offer Charles the Bald.

Thus, I contend and conclude that Weland had left the Seine still in command of his fleet, and maybe even of the whole conglomerate fleet.[4] If this is so then it would have been him and his fleet who had exchanged hostages with Robert and received the promise of 6,000 pounds of silver, a view also held by Karl von Kalckstein in his underappreciated study *Robert der Tapfere*.[5]

The immediately following baptism of Weland and his family in the presence of King Charles, to whom they had apparently come, probably at Tours in late April, looks very much

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[1] J. Lair, *Les Normands dans l'île d'Oscelle*, p. 18.

[2] F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 58, n. 3.

[3] In fact, with the exception of the debatable mention in the *Annals of Fulda s.a.* 850 [=852] that Godfrid had been granted land there is no mention in any contemporary source that any king of West Francia ever offered Scandinavian chieftains any land in West Francia proper - excluding in Frisia which was in 'Lotharingia' - where they might or ever did 'prendre pied' until the first half of the tenth century. It is outside the scope of this work to consider the 'intentions' of the Northmen in France in the ninth century, but one should compare the analysis of Horst Zettel, who in various places in his underappreciated work *Das Bild der Normannen und der Normanneneinfälle in westfränkischen, ostfränkischen und angelsächsischen Quellen des 8. bis 11. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1977) casts doubt on the oft-repeated idea that the Northmen wanted to find lands to settle in France, with the rebuttal of Hans Werner Goetz in his short article 'Zur Landnahmepolitik der Normannen im Fränkischen Reich', *Annales des Historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein,* 183 (1980), pp. 9-17. For what it is worth, my reading of the sources concerning the ninth century would tend to support Zettel's contentions rather than Goetz's.

[4] Like Lair, both Vogel and Coupland assume that Weland had come with his fleet from the Seine to the Loire, although in my opinion they did not bring out this as clearly at they might have done: see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 192; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 58, 62. Ultimately, it is only Ferdinand Lot who thought Weland had remained with King Charles on the Seine when all the other Northmen had left for the sea in late March 862.

[5] K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere*, p. 77.

like a condition that Charles had made as a counterpart to the earlier promise of payment and exchange of hostages.[1] Such Frankish demands for the baptism of Northmen and particularly of their leaders were a common practice.[2] It may even have been that Charles had made an earlier bargain with Weland back on the Seine in February when the latter had commended himself to the king, a bargain that could well have involved not only the withdrawal of the Northmen from the Seine but also Weland's move to Brittany and the Loire to counter Salomon and the king's rebellious son Louis.

To return to Brittany and Salomon, sometime before 17 June 862 Salomon had granted his palace at Plélan to the monks of Redon to establish a monastery there as a place of refuge because of the presence of Northmen in the area.[3] It is thus possible that the 'mercenary' Northmen whom Robert had hired, still led I would suggest by Weland, had very soon afterwards made an incursion into or towards Salomon's core territory which in some ways would be what we might expect because Robert had hired these Northmen to help him, precisely and explicitly, because he had been unable to put up with Salomon any longer.[4]

Whatever the case may have been, Robert with his hired Northmen had quickly brought Charles's son Louis to heel because a little later in the year Hincmar tells us: 'Louis, who had recently defected from his father, returned to him and asked forgiveness from him and from the bishops too for his excesses. He bound himself by most strict and solemn oaths to be loyal to his father in future,'[5] and in early 863 at a meeting at the monastery of Entrammes (dep. Mayenne, between Le Mans and Rennes) Salomon and his leading men met Charles and commended themselves to the king, swore an oath of fidelity and paid 'the tribute owed by his land according to ancient custom'.[6] This submission of Salomon was certainly as Janet Nelson

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[1] It could well have been that some (or all) of the 6,000 pounds of silver was only handed over at this time.

[2] See for the many examples of this P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*; *idem*, *Histoire des vikings*; S. Lebouteiller, *Faire la paix dans la Scandinavie médiévale. Recherche sur les formes de pacification et les rituels de paix dans le monde scandinave au Moyen Âge (VIIIe-XIIIe siècles)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Caen Normandy, 2016); *idem*, 'Négocier et faire la paix avec les Vikings : entre familiarité et pragmatisme', *Revue d'Histoire Nordique*, 22 (2017), pp. 249-68.

[3] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 85, pp. 64-5, no. 241, pp. 189-92. For which see also A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 313; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 26. It might possibly also have been at this time that the abbot of Redon, Conwoïon, had asked Courtagen, the bishop of Vannes, for permission for three of his priests to be ordained as monks by any bishop or in any see because of the difficulty of travelling to Vannes during the current invasion of the Northmen; see *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, Appendix no. 46, p. 372. We do not know if the whole Redon community fled to Plélan at this time, as explicitly suggested by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 192 and n. 1, and implied by H. Guillotel and J.-C. Cassard (*ibid.*); even if they had some of them were back at Redon by April 866; see *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 207, p. 160.

[4] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

[5] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 92; trans. Nelson, p. 101. This probably happened in mid- or late summer 862. Cf. J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 204 ; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 479 and n. 2.

[6] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 96; trans. Nelson, p. 105.

says because his 'position had been weakened by the events of 862',[1] meaning his defeat at the hands of Robert - almost certainly helped by the Northmen he had hired. In a very real way Robert's (and Charles's) second employment of Weland and his fleet had paid off in terms of ridding Charles of threats from his opponents: Salomon's Bretons and his briefly rebellious son Louis.

The Loire throughout the rest of 862 and 863 and Weland's death

What became of the Northmen who had arrived from the Seine thereafter, throughout the rest of 862 and most of 863?

It is a noticeable and significant fact that from the summer of 862 all the way through to the end of 863 there are no reports of any Scandinavian activity - whether raids or otherwise - along the whole Loire valley, in Brittany or anywhere in northern France.[2] Why was this?

Vogel would have it that: 'Die Normannen, einstweilen noch Bundesgenossen der Franken, blieben den Winter über in Anjou oder doch am Unterlaufe der Loire sitzen', 'The Northmen, once again allies/confederates of the Franks, remain over the winter in Anjou or even sitting on the lower-reaches of the Loire', under their 'Führer Weland'.[3] I think this must be correct. Throughout the remainder of 862 and until December 863 when an attempt was made to take the city of Poitiers[4] there not a single mention in any annal, chronicle or charter of any Scandinavian activity along the Loire valley or in the surrounding area. Coupland suggests that there was an incursion made from the Loire into northern Neustria in 863 which caused the flight of various Neustrian monastic communities along with their saintly relics,[5] but whilst this is theoretically possible I show in detail in Appendix 2 why it is unlikely to have been the case.

The next thing we hear of Weland is in late December 863 at Nevers on the upper Loire to where he had come to meet King Charles. Charles himself had come to Nevers from Auxerre in Burgundy evidently to seek out his rebellious son Charles the Young at his 'capital' of Bourges.[6] It was while at Nevers that Hincmar, who was likely there as well, tells us the following story:

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[1] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 105, n. 4.
[2] I shall discuss the arrival of a Scandinavian fleet in Aquitaine in late summer or autumn of 863 later.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 192. What had become of any remaining Northmen who had returned from Spain is not known but I do not think that they had been entirely eradicated.
[4] To which we shall return, including dating this attack on Poitiers to December.
[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 61-62.
[6] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 104; trans. Nelson, p. 110. See also F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 481; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 320-22.

> Duo quoque Nortmanni, qui nuper cum Vuelando christianitatem dolo, ut tunc dicebatur et post claruit, postulantes de nauibus exierunt, super eum infidelitatem miserunt. Quorum unus secundum gentis suae morem cum eo negante armis coram rege contendens, illum in certamine interfecit.[1]

Nelson translates this as:

> Two Northmen who had recently left their ships with Weland and come asking to be baptised as Christians now revealed - and it afterwards turned out to be true - that this had been a trick, and they accused Weland of bad faith. Weland denied this. So, according to the custom of their people, one of the Northmen challenged him to single combat in King Charles's presence, and killed him in the fight.[2]

One could suggest a very slight variant to this particular translation. Does it not perhaps more likely mean that the two Northmen who came to Charles had before (*nuper*) received baptism alongside Weland, doubtless in late April 862 at Tours, an act which was now found out to have been in bad faith. They now came from their fleet/ships (*de nauibus exiderunt*) and accused Weland of infidelity or bad faith (*super eum infidelitatem miserunt*). Weland denied this - had he quickly come from his fleet to do so or had he arrived with the two other Northmen? - and the result was that one of the accusers and the accused (Weland) fought their duel in front of the king in which Weland was killed.[3] It might be of interest to remind ourselves that Hincmar had previously said that Weland and his family had become Christians in 862; there is no mention of others having done so although this could certainly have been the case.[4] Such an interpretation is perhaps supported by Pierre Bauduin's translation of this passage:

> Deux Normands, qui, avec Weland naguère, avaient demandé la religion chrétienne (=le baptême) par ruse, comme on le disait alors et comme cela apparut par la suite, sortirent de leur navire, et lui reprochèrent son infidélité (ou : l'accusèrent d'infidélité). Alors que

[1] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 104.
[2] *AB* 863: trans. Nelson, pp. 110-11.
[3] This interpretation is also that of W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 192-93, who is closely followed by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 62: 'Hincmar related that two of Weland's men who had professed Christianity at the same time as their chief, but without true conviction, accused Weland of disloyalty towards Charles the Bald,' as well as that of A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1995), p. 96, who says that in 863 'Christian vikings from Weland's own fleet were accusing their leader of bad faith and trickery and he lost his life defending his honour, if not his Christianity, in single combat'.
[4] Weland had at least two sons, one of whom had been old enough in late 861 to command his own band.

celui-ci (=Weland) le niait, l'un d'eux, suivant les coutumes de son peuple, se mesura avec lui par les armes, en présence du roi, et le tua en combat (singulier).[1]

On top of the fascinating insight into the way the Northmen might settle their disputes two questions are begged by the story. First, where had Weland been before he came to Nevers to confront his accusers? Second, in what had his supposed bad faith or disloyalty consisted? An accusation that Hincmar says had then turned out to be true.

Vogel, followed closely by Coupland,[2] suggested that after his and his family's baptism in the spring of 862 Weland had remained in Charles's vicinity/entourage, which implies that after his baptism he had in some way or other given up, or perhaps even been deprived of, the leadership of his fleet. Yet a powerful chieftain such as Weland who had so greatly benefitted from his and his fleet's services to Charles and his 'faithful man' Robert the Strong over the past couple of years would most likely never have willingly given up the very base and tool of his power: his fleet. Weland's Christian baptism, whether he really believed in it or not, had in all likelihood been just another step, probably at Charles's insistence, in cementing him to the royal-Frankish cause. That his baptism might have been the cause of his fleet being disaffected from him cannot be ruled out,[3] but there is no evidence for such a thing having happened here or indeed at any other time in the ninth century. When a Scandinavian chieftain agreed to be baptised it was usually all part of the game and it never happened without an acceptable counterpart in the form of a tribute, a hire fee or a concession of land. Vogel's and Coupland's suggestion that Weland remained with Charles after his baptism (implicitly without his fleet) is just imagination or wishful thinking with no evidential support, and it also rather lacks credibility given the context.[4] In late 863, therefore, when Weland had come to Nevers he had probably also come from his ships which may have been based on their riverine island base

[1] I thank Pierre Bauduin for undertaking this translation at my request. It was also discussed with Marie-Agnès Lucas Avenel.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 192: 'Danach blieb er offenbar in Karls Umgebung', 'After which he clearly stayed in Charles's circle/surroundings/vicinity'; after which Vogel immediately tells the story of the duel at Nevers. In this he is followed by S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 107: 'Thereafter he seems to have remained in the king's entourage, for when he is next mentioned, it is in the context of the royal court's stay at Nevers.'
[3] As proposed by H. Zettel, *Das Bild der Normannen*, p. 168.
[4] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 99, n. 10, explicitly follows S. Coupland in her telling of these years; she says of Weland's baptism in 862: 'Information earlier in this annal [the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*] suggests that Weland was no longer in overall control of his confederation, hence perhaps his quest for Frankish support.' I have no idea what this 'earlier information' in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* Nelson is referring to which might suggest such a conclusion.

near the monastery of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil at Mont-Glonne, a base which had been established by his predecessors on the Loire in the early 850s and would be used again later.[1]

To turn to the second question: What could Weland's disloyalty have consisted in?[2] Obviously, it must have happened after his baptism in 862 because Hincmar refers to this event here.[3] But given the lack of any activities of his or other Northmen after this date, throughout the rest of 862 and most of 863, it would seem that his purported disloyalty had occurred not much before December 863 when Weland defended his honour and died at Nevers.

Just after reporting Weland's death Hincmar says: 'Meanwhile (*Interea*) he [Charles] received the sad news that the Northmen had come to Poitiers, and though the city was ransomed, they had burned the church of the great confessor St Hilary.'[4] Could there be a connection? Had Weland and his men simply got bored or dissatisfied with being 'recruits' in Charles's service, to use Janet Nelson's expression,[5] and reverted to their raiding ways? It is not inconceivable, some Northmen had after all undertaken this attack. I shall discuss the arrival of a Scandinavian fleet in Aquitaine in late summer or autumn of 863 later. It is often said that it was these Northmen who were also responsible for the attempt on Poitiers shortly thereafter although I will suggest that this is unlikely to have been the case.

After spending Christmas at Nevers[6] in the very first days of 864 'Charles arranged his troops and ordered the Aquitanians to advance against the Northmen who had burned the church of St-Hilary' [at Poitiers].[7] That Charles ordered the 'Aquitanians' to advance against the Northmen who had attacked Poitiers, and did not use his own troops it appears, would suggest that those responsible were still somewhere in Aquitaine.[8] If the Northmen who had attacked

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[1] If this is so then it suggests that at least a part of Weland's fleet which had left the Seine in March was still on the Loire at the end of 863, a matter of some import.

[2] My present assumption is that Weland's infidelity was towards Charles who had previously hired him and later baptised him and his family. But as Pierre Bauduin says (pers. comm.): 'Le texte ne permet pas de préciser contre qui est tournée l'infidélité : contre le roi ? contre les deux Normands ? Voire même pourquoi pas, contre Dieu ? L'idée que Weland n'est pas loyal à Charles est une piste mais peut être pas la seule.'

[3] It being suggested that this baptism had been deceitful or at least disingenuous; but even if so, this would hardly have been any big surprise and certainly not the cause eighteen months later of the accusation of treachery and the subsequent fight to the death.

[4] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 104; trans. Nelson, p. 111.

[5] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 206.

[6] *AB* 863: Grat, p. 104; trans. Nelson, p. 111.

[7] *AB* 864: Grat, pp. 104-5; trans. Nelson, p. 111. I have no idea why W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 198, would have it that it was King Charles's son 'Charles the Young of Aquitaine' - 'Der junge Karl von Aquitaine' - who shortly before he met his father at Compiègne led the Aquitanians against those Northmen who had attacked Poitiers, although 'ohne daß doch ein Erfolg erzielt worden wäre', 'without however a result/success having being achieved'.

[8] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 484-85, says of Charles the Bald that: 'Il n'osa envoyer contre l'ennemi son fils Charles, beaucoup trop jeune, et dont la soumission lui inspirait si peu de confiance qu'il se décida à le ramener "en France"; mais, tandis que lui-même gagnait Compiègne, il fit partir des contingents formés

Poitiers had still been in the Loire valley in early 864 then Charles would have surely used his own troops to 'advance' on them.

If as Ferdinand Lot contended[1] the attempt on Poitiers had been conducted by the Northmen who had arrived in more southerly Aquitaine in the autumn of 863, initially under a leader called *Maur*, although he had been quickly killed,[2] then Weland could not have been the leader at Poitiers although his disloyalty may well have consisted of countenancing it or turning a blind eye to it.[3] However, although in all likelihood Maur's Northmen had initially come from the Loire and were most probably a part of Weland's 'confederated' force, to use Janet Nelson's expression, it was not them who attacked Poitiers.

The Northmen who had attacked Poitiers in my view later accompanied Pippin II to Toulouse in early 864. These Northmen may even have been those who had returned for Spain,[4] but Weland's bad faith or disloyalty might have been that he had held discussions with Pippin, as those who went with him to Toulouse must have done.

Alternatively, could Weland and the Northmen from Spain have together talked with Pippin? It will be remembered that in the spring of 862 the Northmen from the Seine had been 'joined by the ones who had been in Spain'.[5] Robert's defeat of the twelve ships from Spain hired by Salomon had probably happened before the fleet from the Seine arrived in the area, and there is no suggestion that the two groups ever fought each other or were even ever antagonistic towards each other thereafter. If Weland had in one way or another held talks with Pippin this would certainly have been seen by Charles as an act of infidelity on the part of his seemingly

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d'Aquitains contre les incendiaires de Saint-Hilaire. Commandés vraisemblablement par le fidèle comte de Poitou, Rannoux […].'

[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 482-84 and notes.

[2] See *AAng* 863, p. 486; *ChrAquit* 863, p. 253. Lot's general view is that the Northmen who attacked Poiters in late 863 were not any force from the Loire but were those who had arrived further south earlier in the year. This whole complex issue will be discussed shortly.

[3] In Karl von Kalckstein's opinion (*Robert der Tapfere*, p. 86): 'Während des Aufenhalts zu Nevers [of Charles] hatten zwei mit ihm getaufte Genossen Weland, der also mit nach Aquitanien gezogen war, des verraths bezüchtigt […]. Er mochte seine stellung zu Spioniren benuzt haben und sich den gleich darauf Aquitanien verheerende Normannen haben anschliessen wollen.' This is a tremendously complex idea to unpack. It seems that Kalckstein is not only suggesting that Weland may have used his position to spy (on whom?), and had wanted to join with the ravaging Northmen who had just recently come to Aquitaine, but he also seems to say that Weland (with his two 'Genossen') had gone to Aquitaine ('der also mit nach Aquitanien gezogen war'). But if Weland had really gone to Aquitaine in 863, and then he had wanted to join with the Northmen who had arrived there (initially under *Maur*), then does it not imply that Weland and his fleet had been sent to Aquitaine by Charles the Bald himself, perhaps in his capacity as a trusted and recently baptised mercenary, to help Charles establish his control of Aquitaine? In which case his infidelity or treachery towards Charles had consisted of, as Kalckstein says, spying for Maur's Northmen to the detriment of Charles? This is all not impossible but still just conjecture.

[4] It is not impossible that these Northmen from Spain had joined with some of the Northmen who had come from the Seine, possibly even some of Weland's own fleet, or that of one of his sons. It will be recalled that Hincmar wrote that these Northmen from the Seine had been 'joined by the ones who had been in Spain'; see *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

[5] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 89; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

loyal mercenary, a man who had previously commended himself to the king and later been baptised in his presence, as well as having been paid two enormous hire fees for his services.

We will probably never know the truth. But whatever the case might have been Weland was now dead. If he had still been the leader of a part of or all of the Northmen on the Loire until that date then that part of his fleet which had stayed on the Loire would certainly thereafter have been under new leadership.

A short summary of Weland's career

Before leaving Weland behind a few summary words on his life and his importance would perhaps not be amiss. Perhaps first coming from Frisia, but more certainly I think having spent some time in Frisia, he had then raided on the Somme. From there he came to be in the pay of Charles the Bald and whilst he was waiting for his hire fee to be collected he had gone to England, without any real success it must be said, before returning to the Continent during the course of 860, mostly likely I think to Frisia where he may have collected reinforcements. It is possible that some of his force had made the attack on the twin monasteries of Saint-Bertin and Saint-Omer in early June 860 but this is not certain and those responsible may have come from the Seine. Eventually in the spring of 861 his newly augmented fleet sailed to the Seine to fulfil the conditions of his prior bargain with Charles. Having raised his hire price because of his increased numbers he had then managed to remove the Northmen from the island of Oissel after a long siege, as required by Charles the Bald as the counterpart to his payment, and, in the process, he had enriched himself even more by the payment the Oissel Northmen had paid him. Rather than return to the sea, to where he and the Northmen from Oissel had first gone, Weland may have remained in Charles's service over the winter of 861-62 and although it is possible that his son had been involved in the attack on Meaux at the end of January 862 Weland had sworn fealty to Charles in February. He and the other Northmen then left the Seine in late March as agreed with Charles and most of them (I suggest led by Weland) went to southern Brittany/the Lower Loire where Robert the Strong, with the assent of or even at the instigation of the king, hired him once again to help in the king's struggles with Salomon's Bretons and the king's rebellious young son Louis the Stammerer. As part of his lucrative 'alliance' with Charles/Robert, Weland and his family had agreed to be baptised at Tours. Clearly Weland's Northmen had helped Robert the Strong bring both the Bretons and Louis the Stammerer to heel, after which he and at least some of his ships seem to have remained on the Loire for the

next year or so without having to engage in any more activities on Charles's or Robert's behalf or undertaking any independent raiding - until the end of 863 when he died in a duel.

Coupland's characterisation of Weland as just another Scandinavian poacher turned gamekeeper[1] is in a real sense very true, although in my opinion it places a little too much emphasis on the Frankish perspective.

Weland was in many ways the epitome of a ninth-century 'viking' chieftain. He had his own agency. He wanted to enrich himself and reward his men as they expected, and he seems to have had no interest in acquiring land to settle. All his dealings with Charles the Bald and Robert the Strong were directed towards this objective and he was quite happy to sell the services of himself and his fleet to the Franks - but only at a very high price! At all this he was extremely adept and successful and his swearing fealty to Charles on the Seine and later agreeing to be baptised at Tours were just things one had to do to get the Franks to hand over immense amounts of money. Who knows what Weland might have achieved and how he would have been remembered if his life had not been cut short at Nevers at the end of 863?

It is to the activities of Northmen south of the Loire, in Aquitaine proper, in late 863 and early 864 that we now turn. I will first examine the 'facts' of these activities as best we can reconstruct them, after which we will address the question of where the Northmen involved had come from. It will then be argued that the two separate fleets and warbands involved had both come from the Loire.

We will start with the Northmen who went all the way to Clermont.

The raids into Aquitaine and to Clermont: 863-864

In the autumn of 863[2] one fleet of the Northmen which had probably previously been on the Loire departed for Aquitaine.

Having arrived somewhere on the Aquitanian coast, perhaps in the Saintonge near where the river Charente emptied into the *Ocean*, Count Turpio came to confront them. The *Annals of Angoulême* tell us: '863. IV. Nonas Oct.[3] Turpio comes, miles fortissimus defendsorque optimus, vir magnificus, amator clericorum, ecclesiarum aedificator, pauperumque recreator, cum Normannis congreditur et, occiso Mauro ab illo occiditur, et tota illa regio a Normannis capitur et succenditur.'[4] The later *Chronicle of Aquitaine* (*Chronicon Aquitanicum*) is briefer,

[1] See S Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', pp. 104-7.
[2] I would think in September but possibly in August.
[3] That is 4 October counting back four days inclusively from the 7th.
[4] *AAng* 863, p. 486.

but it adds that Turpio was the count of Angoulême: '863. Turpio, Engolismensis comes, cum Nortmannis congreditur et occidens eorum regem, nomine Maurum, ab eo ipse occiditur.'[1] At least according to Ademar of Chabannes Turpio had been instituted as count of Angoulême in *c*.839 by Louis the Pious.[2] In regard to the name *Maurus* or *Maur*, Vogel suggested that this was possibly the 'northern' name 'Már'.[3]

More pertinent here is that Adrevald of Fleury, who was writing within just a few years of these events, tells us something of their route. Apparently taking advantage of the lack of effective Aquitanian *duces* to defend them, 'foreign nations' or 'barbarians', that is Northmen, arrived on the 'Ocean littoral'. They then headed east for Clermont, of old a most illustrious Aquitanian town, wreaking havoc and devastation on Aquitanian castles, villages and towns as they went:

> Quid Aquitanicae gentis ingentem referam afflictationem, quae olim bellorum nutrix, nunc frigidam bello praeferat dextram, suisque orbata luminibus, ducibus egeat aliensis? Etenim ipsa quoque optimos quosque genitalis soli in sese elidens, patet nunc praeda gentibus aliensis. Ab ipso quoque, ut ita loquar, Oceani littore, orientem versus, Avernam usque, clarissimam veteri tempestate Aquitaniae urbem, nulla libertatem retinere valuit regio, non oppidum aut vicus, non denique civitas quae non strage ferali conciderit paganorum.[4]

> Que dire d'immense souffrance du peuple d'Aquitaine qui, autrefois pourvoyeur des guerres, fournit maintenant à la guerre une main languissante et, privé de ces élites, a besoin de chefs étrangers ? En effet, après avoir écrasé en lui-même les meilleurs des hommes de son sol fécond, il s'offre maintenant comme une proie aux nations étrangères. Du littoral même de l'Océan, pour ainsi dire, et vers l'Est, jusqu'à Clermont, autrefois

[1] *ChrAquit* 863, p. 253.
[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 16, p. 132. *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 16, p. 213. I will discuss Turpio more later.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 197. This suggestion (Vogel uses a question mark) has often been taken up and presented as a fact. There are many ON, OHG and OE names involving the element mar, marr, mærr or similar as the first or second theme in dithematic names. It generally means famous or on other occasions sea/ocean or even horse/warhorse. If Maurus is a rendition of the name Mar or similar then it could be a short form of one such dithematic name. But equally possibly the name Maurus could have been connected in some way with the word *Maur* meaning black, as in the Moors/Maures, or perhaps likelier in relation to the sixth-century Saint Maur, Alcuin's favourite saint, whose name was also taken by Raban 'Maurus' in the ninth century. Could Maurus even have been a baptismal name? These thoughts are worthy of a closer examination than I can undertake here. But one highly speculative idea might be that Maur/Maurus, if it is a baptismal name, could even have been one of Weland's sons who were baptised with their father by Charles the Bald at Tours in the spring of 862, it being remembered that Raban Maurus had studied at Saint-Martin of Tours, and in the sixth century 'Saint Maur' had supposedly founded the abbey of Glanfeuil on the Loire.
[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 33, p. 73.

> très illustre ville d'Aquitaine, aucune région ne put conserver sa liberté, aucune place forte, aucun village, pas une seule cité qui ne tombât sous le massacre sauvage des païens.[1]

Adrevald then gives a list of the towns which had been reported to him as being attacked: Poitiers, once a most prosperous town in Aquitaine, Saintes, Angoulême,[2] Périgueux, Limoges and Clermont, the furthest point that barbarian swords had yet reached. The Northmen even (later) came to Bourges, the *caput* of the Aquitanian realm:

> Testatur hoc Pictavis, fecundissima quondam urbs Aquitaniae, hoc Sanctonae, hoc Engolisma, hoc Petrogorium, hoc Lemovicas; hoc certe Arvernus, terminus nunc barbarici gladii, ipsumque Avaricum, caput regni Aquitanici, proclamant, nulla scilicet bellica obviante manu, hostile graviter sese concidisse incursu.[3]

> En témoignent Poitiers, autrefois très riche ville d'Aquitaine, et Saintes, et Angoulême, et Périgueux, et Limoges, et à coup sûr l'Auvergne, point extrême atteint jusqu'ici par le glaive des barbares, et encore Bourges elle-même, capitale du royaume d'Aquitaine ; toutes ces villes proclament qu'aucune force guerrière ne s'y opposant, elles ont été gravement atteintes par les attaques ennemies.[4]

That Clermont in the Auvergne was the eastern limit of this long-range *chevauchée* is confirmed by Hincmar of Reims who says that in early 864: 'The Northmen got to Clermont where they slew Stephen, son of Hugh, and a few of his men, and they returned unpunished to their ships.'[5]

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[1] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. and trans. Davril *et al*, chap. 33, p. 175.

[2] Ademar of Chabannes says that his own monastery of Saint-Cybard in Angoulême was 'so ravaged by the Northmen that no monks were able to stay there', see *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 19, p. 137, *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap 19, p. 218; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III. 19, p. 138. This can only refer to about 863, for which case see A. Trumbore Jones, 'Pitying the Desolation of Such a Place: Rebuilding Religious Houses and Constructing Memory in Aquitaine in the Wake of the Viking Incursions', *Viator*, 37 (2006), pp. 85-102, at p. 96. Both the short and long versions of the *Annals of Angoulême* refer to the town of Angoulême being rebuilt in 868: see *AAng* 868, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 4, p. 5, and *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 16, p. 486.

[3] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 33, p. 73. The author of the *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* copies the whole of Adrevald's story here and places it in the years immediately after 830! See *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, pp. 358-59. See also Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: trans. Delhommeau and Bouhier, preface to book 2, p. 132: 'Bordeaux, Périgueux, Saintes, Angoulême et Toulouse sont prises.' Ademar of Chabannes gives a hopelessly confused and undated list of the places on the Loire, in Aquitaine and in Francia attacked by the Northmen, including Bordeaux, Saintes, Angoulême and Limoges. Nothing of any independent chronological substance can be gleaned from this list which is just a jumbled hotchpotch of places taken from various sources: see *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 17, p. 134, *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap 17, p. 215.

[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. and trans. Davril *et al*, chap. 33, pp. 175, 177.

[5] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 105; trans. Nelson, p. 111. The case and history of Count Stephen is most instructive and has been illuminated by J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 174, 185, 192, 196-97, 201-2.

It seems that much of the town was burned,[1] probably including the church of Sainte-Marie Principale/Notre-Dame-du-Port along with the monastery of Saint-Alyre outside the town.[2]

Lot believed that 'Adrevald, rapportant la destruction des villes d'Aquitaine, observe un ordre chronologique sensiblement exact'.[3] We know that Poitiers was attacked and ransomed at the end of 863 and Clermont was taken in early 864 - probably in about January but possibly February.[4]

Regarding the remainder of the Aquitanian towns mentioned by Adrevald, under the year 864 the problematic *Translatio sanctae Faustae* says 'paganorum barbaries, quos usitato sermone Danos seu Normannos appellant', came into the regions of Aquitaine and Gascony in innumerable ships. and directed themselves towards the towns of Saintes and Bordeaux.[5] This must refer in part at least to those Northmen who arrived in Aquitaine in late autumn 863, probably at the mouth of the Charente. Ferdinand Lot observed, 'L'auteur de la *Translatio* a ramassé sous la seule année 864 des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis l'automne de 863 pour le moins'.[6] This all seems to confirm what Adrevald of Fleury says about Saintes being attacked.

These Northmen must have first travelled up the Charente to Saintes, which they attacked, before moving on towards Angoulême itself where they gave battle with Count Turpio of Angoulême. The devastation of the Angoumois reported in the *Annals of Angoulême* might have involved aggressions both before and after the battle in which both Turpio and Maurus were killed. The fact that Adrevald, Ermentarius and Ademar all mention that the town of

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[1] The Berry *Annals of Massay* (*Annales Masciacenses*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 3 (Hanover, 1839), pp. 169-70, at p. 169) report all this wrongly under the year 865: '865. Stephanus a Marcomannis occiditur et Arvernis incenditur.' See also F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 489, n. 2; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 199, n. 4.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 199 and n. 4; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 486-88, n. 2, at p. 488, and p. 489, n. 2.

[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 483, n. 3.

[4] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 487-88, p. 483, n. 3, suggests the Northmen reached Clermont in about January or February. L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 323, says: 'Vers la fin de l'année l'Auvergne fut atteinte, Clermont assiégée.' W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 199, has the Northmen after ravaging the Angoumois making their foray to Clermont in 864. In this he is explicitly followed by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 62-63.

[5] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727: 'Tempore quo, post Domini nostri Jesu Christi incarnationem DCCCLX1III annos impletus est, obtinente regnum Francorum Carolo rege, filio Ludovici magni Imperatoris, grassata est ingens persecutio in ecclesia Christi in regionibus Aquitaniæ seu Gasconiæ. Siquidem paganorum barbaries, quos usitato sermone Danos seu Normannos appellant, a suis sedibus cum innumerabili exeuntes navali gestamine, ad Sanctonicam sive Burdegalensem urbes sunt advecti. Indeque passim in praefatis discurrentes provinciis, urbes depopulando, monasteria ecclesias necnon et cuncta hominum aedes igne cremantes, non parvas hominum strages occidendo dederunt.'.

[6] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 489-90, n. 4. See also S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 62 and n. 14.

Angoulême was attacked, and that the whole region was being ravaged (*tota illa region a Normannis congreditur et succenditur*) and the count of Angoulême was killed does rather suggest that the town of Angoulême itself was taken.[1] In terms of Périgueux, a town which had previously been taken and plundered by the Northmen in 849, we only have the testimony of Adrevald. After quite rightly arguing that the taking of the town clearly refers to about 863 and not to the previous capture of the town in 849 Lot says: 'Une seconde prise de Périgueux en 863-864 est très admissible : cette ville étant reliée, par une voie romaine d'un côté à Angoulême et à Saintes, de l'autre à Limoges, était si facilement accessible aux Normands installés à Saintes,[2] qu'il est presque impossible qu'elle n'ait point été de nouveau visitée par eux.'[3] I can only agree.[4]

Moving further east in the direction of Clermont, Adrevald of Fleury mentions the town of Limoges being touched. Leaving aside Ermentarius and the unreliable Ademar of Chabannes, the only other report of a destruction of Limoges by the Northmen is an undated one in the *Miracles of Saint Martial*[5] which was discussed in Chapter 4 where it was suggested that this took place at this time and not in the early 850s or even late 840s as has sometimes been suggested. An attack on Limoges is quite conceivable because in the context of the raids in southern Aquitaine in 864 (and late 863) the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* say that the abbey of Solignac (dep. Haute-Vienne) just 11 km south of Limoges in the Limousin was burned by the Northmen.[6] This is confirmed by a charter dated 14 June 865 in which Charles the Bald reconfirmed Solignac's possessions at the request of its abbot Bernard because its papers had

[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 483, n. 3, says that 'La prise d'Angoulême est [...] contemporaine' to the attempt on Poitiers and the arrival at Clermont, and thus it happened in late 863. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 62: 'On 12 October 863 [*sic*, the date was 4 October; 12 October would be the 4th of the Ides of October] Count Turpio of Angoulême was killed in battle against the invaders, but only after he had slain Maur, who was presumably the Vikings' leader. The Northmen then proceeded to destroy the town of Angoulême and lay waste the entire region.'

[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 488, n. 1: 'La voie romaine unissant Limoges à Clermont facilitait beaucoup la marche des envahisseurs.'.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 485, n. 2. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 63, n. 25, thinks Lot was wrong in suggesting Périgueux was attacked because Adrevald's list of towns sacked is 'not chronological'. Presumably then Adrevald was referring to 849? I agree with Lot that Adrevald's list is likely chronological, particularly when we consider it starts with the attack on Poitiers in December 863 and ends with the burning of Bourges in 867.

[4] For interest there is an extant, but partial, letter to an unnamed bishop of Périgueux from an unknown prelate asking for authorisation for the transfer of a priest of his parish 'pro persecutione Nortmannorum': *Formulae extravagantes*, II, ed. K. Zeumer, *MGH*, *Formulae merovingici karolini aevi* (Hanover, 1866), pp. 549-71, at chap. 24, p. 566. This is dated by K. Zeumer (p. 566) to 863 without giving any reason, and similarly by P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 377, whereas S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 31, suggests perhaps 849.

[5] *Miracula sancti Martialis*, ed. Holder-Egger, book 3, chap. 6, p. 282.

[6] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727: 'Erat autem tunc in pago Lemovicno a praefatis paganis, incensum monasterium, quod Solempniacum [Solemmemniacum] more antiquo vocant.' See also F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 485-86 and nn. 1, 2.

perished when the monastery had been burned by the pagans,[1] as also did the Frankish bishops assembled at the synod of Soissons in August 866 at the request in very moving terms of Abbot Bernard: 'quoniam Northmannorum crudelitate grassante priora instrumenta incendio fuerant concremata.'[2]

Apparently, and again according to the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, the monks of Solignac had managed to flee and found refuge in one of the monastery's *cellae* at Puy-d'Arnac/Brivezac (dep. Corrèze, arr. Brive-la-Gaillarde, cant. Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne) in the *pagu*s of Turenne in the high Limousin between Turenne and Beaulieu-en-Limousin near to the château of Arnac (*castrum Asnense*).[3]

In summary, that the Northmen also took Limoges at this time, although it is only mentioned very explicitly by Adrevald of Fleury, is quite possible; the Northmen were after all in the Limousin at exactly this time when they burned Solignac only 11 km away.[4]

The fact that Adrevald says that Bourges was also attacked has rarely if ever been mentioned by historians. Are we to assume that after leaving Clermont in early 864 these Northmen then went to Berry? I suggest not. What in fact Adrevald is referring to is an attack on Bourges from the Loire which the local *Annals of Massey* place in 867.[5]

Whether as Lot believed all these attacks on Aquitanian towns strictly followed the chronological order given by Adrevald of Fleury or whether some happened during the return journey is unclear.[6] But the Northmen responsible had clearly come from the Charente, first under a leader called Maur who had died fighting Count Turpio somewhere in the Angoumois and afterwards under his successor called Sigfrid. Hincmar says that after attacking Clermont and killing Stephen the Northmen had 'returned unpunished to their ships', which can only have been

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[1] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 283, pp. 125-27. Even so at least six of Solignac's original charters still survive, see P. J. Geary, *Furta sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1978), p. 143; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 486, n. 1; *idem*, 'Sur la date de la translation des reliques de Sainte Foi d'Agen à Conques', *Annales du Midi : revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 16. 64 (1904), pp. 502-8, at pp. 505-6.

[2] *Concilium Suessionense III, Privilegium a synodo concessum monasterio Solemniacensi*, ed. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum collectio*, vol. 15, cols. 735-38, esp. col. 736; *Synodalurkunde für Solignac*, in *Die Konzilien*, ed. W. Hartmann, pp. 225-28.

[3] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1092, (Paris, 1863), p. 728; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 486, n. 1. This flight of the Solignac monks to the Turenne was possibly not the first or the last; for which see F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 486-88, n. 2.

[4] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 488, n. 1, says: 'La voie romaine unissant Limoges à Clermont facilitait beaucoup la marche des envahisseurs.'

[5] *Annales Masciacenses*, p. 169: '867. Biturix eodem anno a paganis vastatur et incenditur.' These annals date the killing of Count Stephen and the buring of Clermont to 865; similarly the attack on and burning of Tours to 854 and not 853. Both of these are one year late, thus perhaps Bourges was attacked and burned in 866, as will be discussed more in Chapter 9.

[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 200, thinks that Limoges was attacked by the Northmen on their way back from Clermont.

their ships on or near the Charente where the next year (865) Hincmar tells us: 'The Aquitanians fought with Northmen based on the Charente under their chief Sigfrid, and slew about 400 of them: the rest fled back to their ships.'[1] That is was Northmen from the Charente who had undertaken this raid all the way to Clermont is accepted by most historians who have ever studied the case, including Lot, Vogel, Auzias, Debord and Coupland,[2] and indeed by myself.

What about the earlier rather unsuccessful attack on Poitiers in late 863, had these same Northmen also been responsible for that as well?[3] It should be doubted as I will explore shortly. But before doing so we need to ask if the raid to Clermont had just been an opportunistic venture to take advantage of the various internal Frankish and Aquitanian conflicts taking place at the time, or was there something more involved?

A happy coincidence?

In the context of the fight of Charles the Bald with his rebellious son Charles the Young and various Aquitanian magnates in 863, Janet Nelson says: 'These conflicts had attracted the intervention of Viking warlords, notably active in the early 860s on the coast and rivers of Aquitaine,'[4] adding that 'once again Vikings did Charles's work for him',[5] meaning the killing of Count Stephen at Clermont and the eventual removal of the marquis of Gothia, Hunfrid, from Toulouse.[6]

When discussing how King Charles's rebellious son Charles the Young had finally[7] submitted to his father at Nevers in December 863, along with other Aquitanian magnates, Auzias says: 'Cependant il était fort difficile au roi de venir à bout d'Étienne et d'Humfroi qui, l'un à Clermont, l'autre à Toulouse, persistaient dans leur révolte. Par une coïncidence

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[1] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 124; trans. Nelson, p. 128. F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 489, n. 1, says: 'C'est en effet sur la Charente que nous les [those who had gone to Clermont] retrouverons, commandés par Siegfried, à l'automne de 865.'

[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 482-89; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 197-200; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 323-24; A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 52; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 62: 'Early in 864 the Vikings from the Charente attacked Clermont, where they killed Count Stephen "cum paucis suorum" and set fire to the town.'

[3] It was only really 'unsuccessful' to the extent that the *cité* of Poitiers was not taken but the Northmen had sacked places outside the city's walls and been paid off, handsomely we might suppose, by Count Ramnulf of Poitiers.

[4] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 202.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] In the same context, but without mentioning the two attacks on Clermont and Toulouse, Marcel Garaud ('Les incursions des Normands en Poitou', pp. 255-56) says: 'Charles l'Enfant, fils cadet de Charles le Chauve, se révoltait contre son père. Les Normands ne laissèrent pas encore échapper une occasion aussi propice. En 863, une bande de païens, venue on ne sait d'où, n'appartenant ni aux Normands de la Seine, ni à ceux d'Espagne, semble être entrée dans le bassin de la Garonne et de la Charente.'

[7] There had been an earlier attempt at reconciliation at Meung in 862 but this had come to nothing; see *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 91; trans. Nelson, p. 100.

heureuse, Charles le Chauve eut contre les rebelles des alliés inattendus : les Normands. Ceux-ci, toujours à l'affût des querelles des Carolingiens et des guerres civiles [...] portèrent en 863 leur gros effort sur l'Aquitaine.'[1]

In terms of the *chevauchée* which ultimately reached Clermont, was this really a 'happy coincidence'? It has been shown that in all probability this raid had been undertaken by the Northmen originally led by Maurus but following his death by a successor called Sigfrid. This fleet had with little doubt come from the Loire and it had probably originally been part of Weland's 'confederacy' from the Seine. If this is so we have to ask why following the death of its leader Maurus in the Angoumois in early October 863 his successor Sigfrid had then decided to make such a long expedition in deep midwinter, encompassing attacking such places as Périgueux and Limoges, to eventually reach Clermont and there killing the 'rebellious' count Stephen.

It may well be suspected that the end point of Clermont was not just an accident. By killing Stephen, the Northmen certainly seem to have done King Charles a big favour. But as far as we can see the Northmen in France never did Frankish kings a favour for nothing. Was Charles the Bald perhaps behind this raid which started in late 863? Any suggestion that this had been the case would simply be a supposition, but Archbishop Hincmar, who suggests says no such thing,[2] also makes no reference at all to the arrival of the Northmen in Aquitaine and the Angoumois in the late summer of 863, Northmen who were likely responsible for the raid to Clermont, nor directly even to the other Northmen's short siege of Toulouse in early 864. In fact, Hincmar like some other Frankish bishops was sometimes very wary if not downright condemnatory of tributes paid by Frankish kings to the Northmen and their use as mercenaries.[3]

This leads us back once again to the meeting Charles had with his rebellious son Charles and some Aquitanian magnates at Nevers on the Loire in December 863. Hincmar wrote that from Auxerre Charles went to Nevers 'where his son Charles came to him and was duly received. His father ordered him to swear fidelity and due subordination with a solemn oath, and he had all the leading men of Aquitaine (*omnes primores Aquitaniae*) again swear loyalty to him'.[4]

It was Auzias's opinion that, 'A l'automne de 863, sans doute après avoir fait des préparatifs considérables, Charles le Chauve se mit en route avec une armée solide : le 2 décembre il était

[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 322.
[2] See *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 105; trans. Nelson, p. 111.
[3] Hincmar's criticism of Charles the Bald's actions towards the Northmen was variable. Sometimes he was critical of the lack of resistance (see *AB s.a.* 865 and 866), however on other occasions he makes no comment (see *AB*, *s.a.* 861 and 877), and regarding Charles's dealing with the Northmen at Angers in 873 he is quite approving, for which see J. L. Nelson, 'The Annals of St Bertin', pp. 36-37.
[4] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 104; trans. Nelson, p. 110.

à Auxerre, où il autorisa Judith à épouser Baudouin, vers la fin du mois à Nevers. Le roi confisqua sans doute les possessions bourguignonnes d'Étienne et d'Humfroi et peut-être en disposa en faveur de nouveaux titulaires. Son but primordial était d'obtenir de gré ou de force la soumission de Charles l'Enfant'.[1] Elsewhere, he says, 'En 863, Charles le Chauve, décidé à soumettre Charles l'Enfant, prit route par Auxerre et Nevers : ne serait-ce pas pour châtier Étienne par une confiscation de ses biens ?'.[2]

This has become the conventional wisdom, that is that Stephen was still a 'rebel' at the end of 863 at the time when Sigfrid's Northmen had either already reached, or were very soon to reach, Clermont. Earlier Ferdinand Lot had proposed another interpretation. He maintained that: 'Il est probable qu'Étienne comte d'Auvergne, parut également à cette assemblée' at Nevers.[3] He adds: 'Étienne s'est soumis à Charles le Chauve près de Nevers, comme les autres grands du centre de l'Aquitaine, et couru ensuite défendre Clermont contre les païens,'[4] and that Stephen 'tenta de défendre […] Clermont, mais il fut tué'.[5] There is nothing inherently implausible in this theory but it is purely an argument from silence; there is simply no evidence that Stephen had gone to Nevers and submitted to Charles the Bald and then rushed back to defend Clermont against the Northmen.

Staying for a moment with the idea that Charles the Bald may have instigated the Northmen's attack towards Clermont, if this had been so it begs the question of the loyalty or otherwise of the other Aquitanian magnates in charge at Saintes, Angoulême, Périgueux and Limoges. If we are to accept the late and unreliable evidence of Ademar of Chabannes and the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* then the local Aquitanian counts were Landric at Saintes, Turpio and his successor Emeno at Angoulême, and Immo at Périgueux.[6]

The rebellion of the Aquitanian magnates in 863 had not been restricted to Hunfrid and Stephen. Others were involved as well which we can see from Hincmar's report that at Nevers *omnes primores Aquitaniae* had been made to again swear their loyalty.

Now Hunfrid was still at Toulouse and Stephen at Clermont, thus who were all the other *primores* of Aquitaine? Auzias quite reasonably suggests that the young Bernard, the son of Bernard of Septimania and his wife Dhuoda, was one of them.[7] On the other hand it is unlikely

[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 320-21.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 306, n. 3.
[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 482, n. 1.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 488, n. 2.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 488.
[6] Emeno and Immo were not the same person as it has often been suggested they were. This is discussed more below.
[7] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 322.

that the noble Ecfrid was there. In 862 Ecfrid had been allied with Stephen 'to draw away the young Charles from obedience to his father',[1] but at the time of the meeting at Nevers he had not yet resubmitted to King Charles and was in fact taken prisoner by Charles's 'faithful man' Robert and brought to the assembly at Pîtres in June 864, where he was forgiven all his crimes at the earnest request of Robert.[2]

But what about counts Turpio, Emeno, Immo and Landric, had they been as loyal to Charles as undoubtedly had been Ramnulf of Poitiers? Perhaps not, perhaps they were also regarded as 'rebellious' in 863. There is nothing against the idea that some Aquitanian magnates south of Poitou had also tried to remove themselves from the Carolingian orbit. If this had been the case then the Northmen's progression across country from the Saintonge all the way to Clermont, taking in such places as the Angoumois, Périgord and the Limousin, may also have been part of a deal made by Charles the Bald with the Northmen involved; that is that the hire contract made had included making attacks on the king's other 'rebellious' Aquitanians. Hincmar's silence on this whole long raid is eloquent. He mentions Count Stephen's death when he had heard of it but nothing at all of the rest. This may have been because all the other rebellious Aquitanian *primores*, who may well have included Emeno,[3] Landric and even Immo, had resworn their fidelity to Charles at Nevers and therefore Hincmar did not want to name them.

In summary, the sparse historical record we have does not enable us to go further, but the evidence we do have does not allow us to exclude the possibility that Charles the Bald had done a deal with Maur's (later Sigfrid's) Northmen to go to Clermont to remove his now enemy Count Stephen and perhaps attack other rebellious Aquitanians along the way - which is precisely what they actually did - although this can never be proved or disproved one way or the other.

Leaving such rather speculative thoughts behind us, we need now to examine the attack on Poitiers in December 863 because it has often been stated this was undertaken by the same Northmen who went on to Clermont.

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[1] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 114; trans. Nelson, p. 119.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] Turpio had been killed before the assembly at Nevers.

The attack on Poitiers in December 863

Archbishop Hincmar wrote that whilst at Nevers at the very end of 863 or in the first few days of 864 Charles 'had received the sad news that the Northmen had come to Poitiers, and though the city was ransomed, they had burned the church of the great confessor St Hilary'.[1]

I think that this dating of when Charles the Bald got news of the attack suggests that it had taken place earlier in December although late November is perhaps just possible, rather than Vogel's 'October or November'.[2] The *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* no doubt reproduces an earlier annal in saying that in 863 Poitiers was devasted by the pagans and the church of Saint-Hilary burned: 'Anno nono post haec, id est DCCCLXIII Pictavis a paganis vastata est, et basilica sancti Hilarii igne cremata est.'[3] Also the author of the *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* under his conglomerate year of 877, but probably referring in reality to events in 863 and certainly not 877,[4] wrote: 'Monasterium Sancti Hilarii et coenobium Sanctae Crucis, quod beata Radegundis regina construxit, destructa erant. Cella Sancti Benedicti Quinciaci destructa. Coenobium Sancti Savini et castrum in quo est, quod Carolus Magnus jussit aedificari, inviolabile mansit solum, caeteris multis destructis quae non occurrit nominare.'[5]

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[1] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 104; trans. Nelson, p. 111.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 197. F. Lot ('La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 484, n. 1) in my view quite correctly concludes that: 'Il résult de ce texte [of Hincmar] que la nouvelle de l'incendie de Saint-Hilaire étant parvenue à Nevers, un peu avant Noël, cet événement ne saurait être antérieur au mois de décembre, tout au plus à la fin de novembre.'

[3] *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent*, in *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, p. 367.
See also F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 484, n. 2.

[4] There was no attack on Poitiers in 877. In 857 the Northmen, with Pippin II, had actually sacked Poitiers (see *AB* 857). In 855 the Northmen never reached the town (see *AB* 855). Of course, it is possible that the attack mentioned here might refer to 865 when Poitiers itself was again sacked (see *AB* 865), but all the places mentioned here lay outside the city walls and thus a date of 863 is most likely.

[5] *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, p. 371. For the abbey of Sainte-Croix at Poitiers see Y. Labande-Mailfert (ed.), *Histoire de l'abbaye Sainte-Croix de Poitiers: quatorze siècles de vie monastique, Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4th series, vol. 19 (Poitiers, 1986-87); for the abbey of Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe and its foundation by Charlemagne see R. Favreau (ed.), *Saint-Savin: L'abbaye et ses peintures murales, Poitiers, Connaissance et promotion du patrimoine de Poitou-Charentes* (Poitiers, 1999); and for Saint-Benoit-de-Quincay see C. Lavaud, *L'abbaye royale de Saint-Benoît: Saint-André de Saint-Benoît de Quinçay-lez-Poitiers dans la Vienne* (Poitiers, 2014). F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 484, n. 3, mentions this report in the *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* but rightly queries 'Quelle autorité accorder à ce texte ?'. M. Garaud ('Les incursions des Normands en Poitou', p. 256, n. 3), as is often the case, follows Ferdinard Lot by saying, 'Nous n'avons pas plus de confiance que M. F. Lot dans la *Chron de Saint-Maixent*, rédigée au milieu du XIIe siècle, qui mentionne sous l'année 877, à propos de la mort de Charles le Chauve, la ruine de nombreux monastères poitevins, parmi lesquels figure Sainte-Croix de Poitiers. Ne place-t-elle pas en 877 la destruction de Luçon, que nous savons avoir eu lieu en 853 d'après la Chronique d'Aquitaine et les Annales d'Angoulême ? Les Annales bénédictines font mention de la destruction de l'abbaye de Saint-Cyprien sans indiquer la date à laquelle elle aurait eu lieu.'

Overall, we should accept that Count Ramnulf I of Poitiers had bought off the Northmen but that this had not prevented them from burning the church of Saint-Hilary and possibly other churches and monasteries outside the city's walls.

As was noted earlier in relation to Weland's bad faith, immediately after hearing of the attack on Poitiers Archbishop Hincmar says that 'Charles arranged his troops and ordered the Aquitanians to advance against the Northmen who had burned the church of St-Hilary'.[1] The Aquitanians who Charles ordered to advance against the Northmen must have included Ramnulf of Poitiers who was also the lay abbot of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers.[2] According to Auzias: 'C'est sans doute à Nevers que Charles le Chauve apprit, peut-être de la bouche de Rannoux, ces désolantes nouvelles. Il confia probablement à Rannoux le soin de concentrer des troupes d'Aquitaine pour s'opposer aux progrès des Normands.'[3] But this ordered reprisal seems not to have happened, or at least as Lot says: 'Les Aquitains n'eurent évidement aucun succès, car les envahisseurs poursuivirent audacieusement leur marche en avant.'[4] An opinion repeated almost *verbatim* by Auzias: 'La résistance ne semble pas avoir eu grand succès, puisque les Normands continuèrent audacieusement leur pérégrinations et leurs ravages.'[5] Certainly this was the case - Ramnulf never seems to have punished the Northmen who had attacked his city. However, as we will see later, only a few months afterwards he did eventually manage to capture Pippin II who

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[1] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, pp. 104-5; trans. Nelson, p. 111.

[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 485 and n. 1. There is also a very interesting Miracle regarding the punishment of a Northman at Poitiers which clearly must be referring to a supposed event in the ninth century when Ramnulf was Count of Poitiers (*c*.839-866). This is translated in É. Carpentier, R. Favreau, and G. Pon, 'Les miracles de Saint Hilaire, de Fortunat à la fin du XIIe siècle. Hagiographie, architecture et histoire', *Revue historique du Centre-Ouest, Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, vol 15. 1 (Poitiers, 2015), pp. 7-94, at p. 59-60, as: 'Que rapporter de ce fourbe Normand [no *fourbe* of Northmen is mentioned elsewhere in this Miracle as we have it today] qui avait faussement reçu le baptême? Au temps où la flotte sauvage des Normands résidait près de Saint-Florent-[le-Vieil], dévastant les confins de l'Aquitaine et les dépeuplant, l'un d'eux, simulant une foi qu'il n'éprouvait pas, entreprit de se faire chrétien. Il déclarait en effet que ce ne serait pas de peu de profit à tout le pays si seulement il était relevé des fonts sacrés par les mains du noble comte Ramnoux. Il y a vraiment tout lieu de penser qu'il avait fait cette requête, comme c'est l'habitude de ce peuple, pour avoir les vêtements blancs. Et comme le baptême de ce Normand avait été célébré selon le rite [mais] sans la grâce, le mal qui était dissimulé dans [la réception] de ce sacrement est apparu à tous manifeste par la vertu de saint Hilaire. En effet, il ne souffrit pas que la fraude d'une telle hypocrisie restât cachée dans sa propre demeure. Ainsi donc, baptisé et revêtu du vêtement blanc qu'il avait tellement désiré, le Normand franchit le seuil de l'église où repose en son corps le cher ami de Dieu saint Hilaire ; alors, bien que le ciel fût parfaitement serein, soudain, rendant manifeste la simulation, un tourbillon de vent se leva subitement et arracha de sa tête son vêtement de baptême ; roulant sur le pavement, celui-ci est emporté par un esprit méchant, je crois. En effet, même s'il en avait reçu l'habit, le Normand n'avait pas été revêtu du vêtement du salut ni enveloppé dans celui de la joie et il ne méritait pas d'être paré de la si grande couronne promise. Profitant ensuite d'un moment favorable, tel qu'un chien retourant à ses vomissures, il revint à sa méchanceté repoussante et à celle des siens.' The editors/translators of this text date the event described to *c*.853 (*ibid*., p. 21 and p. 59 n. 248). I hope to analyse this miracle in more detail at a later date, all I would say at this point is that although this miracle has clearly been concocted from various sources and memories at a later date (possibly in the eleventh century) the internal indictations may suggest we could think of a dating in the 860s for the event (if it happened at all), perhaps even in 863.

[3] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 323.

[4] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 485.

[5] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 323.

had accompanied a group of Northmen to Toulouse, Northmen who I contend had been responsible for the attack on Poitiers. The question here is which Northmen had been responsible for this attack on Poitiers?

Alfred Richard says: 'De l'Angoumois, une petite armée se porta sur Poitiers; les faubourgs de la ville furent brûlés, les églises de Saint-Hilaire et de Sainte-Radegonde furent réduites en cendres. Les défenseurs de la cité, craignant de ne pouvoir longtemps résister, offrirent de se racheter, ce qui fut accepté. Les Normands s'éloignèrent pour continuer ailleurs leurs ravages et poussèrent même jusqu'en Auvergne où ils tuèrent le comte Étienne.'[1] Ferdinand Lot followed Richard. He says that 'some weeks' after the city of Angoulême was 'ruinée de fond en comble' Poitiers was 'menacé'.[2] He later adds that: 'La destruction de l'abbaye [of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers] semble le fait des Normands de la Charente, faisant une pointe vers le Nord, plutôt que des Normands de la Loire.'[3] Léon Levillain, explicitly following Alfred Richard here, says: 'Les Normands, le 4 octobre 863, avaient vaincu et tué le comte d'Angoulême, Turpion, et de là avaient gagné la région poitevine en novembre ou décembre, ils brûlèrent les églises de Saint-Hilaire et de Sainte-Croix, dans les faubourgs de Poitiers.'[4] This is an opinion followed by Robert Favreau who puts it thus: 'En octobre 863 ils [the Northmen] ont ravagé l'Angoumois et en ont tué le comte, avant se porter sur Poitiers dont ils ont brulé les faubourgs, avec les églises de Saint-Hilaire-le-Grand et de Saint-Radegonde.'[5] Similarly Marcel Garaud also explicitly follows Lot and even borrows some of his exact words by saying: 'En 863, une bande de païens, venue on ne sait d'où, n'appartenant ni aux Normands de la Seine, ni à ceux d'Espagne, semble être entrée dans le bassin de la Garonne et de la Charente. Une partie des envahisseurs, après avoir ravagé l'Angoumois et ruiné de fond en comble Angoulême, se dirigea vers Poitiers. La ville se racheta, mais le monastère de Saint-Hilaire, situé hors de l'enceinte, fut la proie des flammes.'[6] Even Léonce Auzias followed the exact same line, 'Les Normands de la Charente se portèrent d'abord sur Saintes, puis sur Angoulême. Là le comte Turpion tenta de résister et succomba dans la lutte (4 octobre 863). Quelque temps après, vers la fin de l'année, c'est Poitiers qui fut menacée : la

[1] A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, p. 24.
[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 483.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 484, n. 2.
[4] L. Levillain, 'La translation des reliques de saint Austremoine à Mozac et le diplôme de Pépin II d'Aquitaine, 863', *Moyen Âge*, 8 (1904), pp. 281-337, at p. 314.
[5] R. Favreau, 'Carolingiens et Robertiens de la fin du IXe à la fin du Xe siècle. L'avènement de la dynastie capétienne et le Nord de l'Aquitaine', in O. Guillot and R. Favreau (eds.), *Pays de Loire et Aquitaine de Robert le Fort aux premiers Capétiens* (Poitiers, 1997), pp. 159-89, at p. 159.
[6] M. Garaud, 'Les incursions des Normands en Poitou', pp. 255-56, and see also nn. 1 and 2.

cité se racheta, mais les grandes abbayes suburbaines furent incendiées'.[1] Such is the way historiography propagates itself.

But is this a reasonable assumption? It can be doubted. It is difficult to believe that a Scandinavian fleet that had just arrived in southern Aquitaine from the Loire, and then advanced into the Saintonge and the Angoumois and had fought Count Turpio had then suddenly decided to go back north to Poitiers, evidently it is implied overland and without their ships, before immediately turning south again to attack such places as Périgueux, Limoges and Clermont; it makes no geographical, logistical or any other sense.

It makes much more sense that the Northmen responsible for the attack on Poitiers in December 863 were those who thereafter took Pippin II with them along the Garonne to Toulouse in the early months of 864. It is to this expedition we will now turn.

Pippin II and the Northmen at Toulouse

The primary evidence for the short siege of Toulouse in early 864 comes from Aimoin of Saint-Germain's *Translations of Saint Vincent* (*Translatio sancti Vincentii/Translatio Beati Vincentii*) written shortly after 866. His text says:

> Nortmanni quorum livido metu sancti levitae et martyris corpus recesserat, tunc temporis ex Garonnae fluvio a Pipino conducti mercimoniis, pariter cum eo ad obsidendam Tolosam adventaverant. Hoc itaque contendentes agonizabant qualiter urbem caperent; terram autem praedae ignisque plaga vastarent atque incolas exitiabilis ferri mucrone sanguinis sitibundi perimerent. Unde non solum Tolosani sed revera Albienses omnes, ne forte more solito illis supervenientibus insperate praeoccuparentur, gravi perculsi formidine, huc atque illuc exterriti, mortis periculum evadere concertantes diffugiunt [...] Denique Nortmanni post aliquos dies in vanum exactos, simul cum conductore, inani obsidione fatigati, recedunt; non ut conati fuerant, excepta in circuitu facta praeda, Dei

[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 323. Given this whole French historigraphical tradition it is perhaps not surprising that S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 62, gets in on the same act: 'On 12 October 863 [actually 4 October] Count Turpio of Angoulême was killed in battle against the invaders, but only after he had slain Maur, who was presumably the Vikings' leader. The Northmen then proceeded to destroy the town of Angoulême and lay waste the entire region. Maur was evidently succeeded by Sigfrid, who was named as the commander of the Vikings on the Charente by Hincmar in 865. In December 863 Poitiers was attacked, and although the town itself was ransomed, the extramural monastery of St Hilaire was burned. The raid was presumably carried out by Sigfrid's men on their way east from Angoulême, since by early 864 they had reached Clermont in the Auvergne.' Coupland here references F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 484, n. 2.

miseratione sanctique levitae et martyris rogatione repulsi, se prevaluisse stomacho laesi dolentes.[1]

In summary Aimoin of Saint-Germain is saying that the Northmen came up the river Garonne to Toulouse conducted/guided by Pippin who had gathered them together/done a bargain with them (*a Pipino conducti mercimoniis*). Together they besieged Toulouse, thinking also of putting the surrounding country to fire and sword and killing all the inhabitants. But having heard of the Northmen's approach many inhabitants of Toulouse and even of Albi[2] feared for their lives and fled in all directions - as was their custom. The Northmen started the siege of the town but it was in vain because they had to withdraw with Pippin their guide (*cum conductore*)[3] after only a few days, not because they were tired but because they were afflicted by stomach pains which Aimoin naturally attributed to the miraculous intervention of Saint Vincent.[4]

That we are told that the Northmen came up the Garonne to Toulouse very clearly means they came from the *nord-ouest*, as Lot put it, and that they and were not the same Northmen who had besieged Clermont as Levillain argued.[5]

We can place this trip up the Garonne and the short siege of Toulouse precisely in early 864 because at the beginning of his story Aimoin says that the Conques monk Audaldus had started

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[1] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *Translations of Saint Vincent*, book 2, chap. 12: A. Duchesne, *Historiae Francorum scriptores*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1636), p. 418; *Translatio sancti Vincentii*, ed. J. Mabillon, *AA, SS, OSB*, IV. 1, 'Monitum', p. 768, this chapter 12 as printed on *ibid*., p. 645 has been very drastically abridged by Mabillon, as followed in *Translatio Beati Vincentii in Monasterium Castrense* [hereafter *TBV*], ed. J.-P. Migne, *PL*, 126, book 2, chap. 12, col. 1022. M. Bouquet and L. Delisle, eds. *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 7 (Paris, 1870), pp. 352-53, give the correct text (with a couple of redactions), which was transcribed by F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 491-92, n. 4. See also the extract given in W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 201 and n. 3.

[2] The monks of Albi do not appear to have been attacked; see Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *TBV*, *PL*, 126, ed. Migne, book 2, chap. 11, col. 1022.

[3] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 328, suggests that the participle *conducti* and the noun *conductore* mean that Pippin had been the Northmen's 'guide' to Toulouse and thus, implicitly, not necessarily their leader as is sometimes said. Similarly L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 324-25, says 'les Normands trouvèrent de nouveau pour les guider un chef qui connaissait parfaitement la région et ses ressources pour l'avoir gouvernée longtemps : Pépin II […] pris comme guide par les Normands de la Garonne, il crut qu'il lui serait aisé de reconquérir Toulouse dont Humfroi s'était emparé […]'. I would agree with this.

[4] J. Calmette's transcription ('Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 153-54, n. 3) stops at *martyris rogatione repulsi* and completely omits the part about the stomach pains: *se prevaluisse stomacho laesi dolentes*. This enables him to summarise as follows (at p. 154): 'Les Normands « ex Garonnae fluvio », - c'est-à-dire en suivant le cours de la Garonne, - vinrent jusqu'à Toulouse, conduits par le roi d'Aquitaine, Pépin II, qui les avait soudoyés ; avec lui, ils assiègent la ville, méditant de mettre à feu et à sang la campagne d'alentour et de tuer tous les citadins. Non seulement les Toulousains, mais même les Albigeois, craignant l'attaque brusque des païens et frappés d'épouvante à la nouvelle de leur approche, s'étaient enfuis, se dispersant de tous côtés. Mais les Normands, après quelques jours d'un siège vain, fatigués de l'inutilité de leurs efforts, se retirent, en même temps que leur guide, non qu'ils aient été chassés par la force, mais, sans avoir été empêchés de ramasser tout autour leur butin, ils ont été repoussés par la grâce divine et par l'intercession du saint diacre et martyr.'

[5] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 492, n. 4; L. Levillain, 'La translation des reliques', p. 314, n. 3. For this point see also J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 154-56, 162-63, 169-71.

his trip to Valencia in his quest to recover the body of Saint Vincent in 855,[1] but it was only 'eight and a half years' later and after many travails when Audaldus was able to resettle at Castres and when the monks of Castres were finally able to recover Saint Vincent's relics, which were brought into the town with great ceremony,[2] hence the siege of Toulouse must have happened in early 864.[3] Elsewhere in his *Translatio* Aimoin tells of the count of Albi, Hermengaudus, surrounded by his troops, being camped in the vicinity of the abbey of Castres;[4] these were, as Joseph Calmette says, 'visiblement les contingents de l'Albigeois concentrés par leur Comte', and 'il semble raisonnable de croire que son rassemblement, sinon son approche, a du être pour quelque chose dans la levée du siège par Pépin et ses alliés'.[5]

It is often said that other evidence for dating the short siege of Toulouse to 864 is found in the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* which is conventionally believed to have been written in the eleventh century. The Bordeaux historian Frédéric Boutoulle says about this: 'La rédaction du texte n'est pas datée mais, d'après le dossier rassemblé par Patrick Geary, elle peut être placée peu après la translation.'[6] I am not at all convinced that the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* was necessarily written shortly after 864. But the *Translatio* says that in the year 864 in the reign of Charles, the son of the great emperor Louis, Christ's church had suffered great persecutions 'in regionibus Aquitaniæ seu Gasconiæ'. Also, pagan barbarians whom one generally calls *Danos seu Normannos*[7] had come in innumerable ships and directed themselves towards the towns of Saintes and Bordeaux, *Sanctonicam sive Burdegalensem*. In these regions (of the Saintonge and the Bordelais) they burned many towns, monasteries and churches and killed many of the inhabitants.[8] Boutoulle translates the relevant part of this passage as:

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[1] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *TBV*, *PL* 126, ed. Migne, book I, chap. 1, col. 1013.
[2] *Ibid*. book. 1, chap. 8, cols. 1017-18
[3] For which see J. Calmette 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 156 and n. 1; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 491 and n. 5, p. 493; L. Levillain, 'La translation des reliques', p. 314 and n. 3.
[4] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *TBV*, ed. Migne, book 2, chap. 18, col. 1024.
[5] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 155. J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, p. 52, says much the same as Calmette: 'Alarmés peut-etre aussi par les mouvements de troupes du comte d'Albi dans le Castrais, que mentionne également Aimoin, ceux-ci [the 'Vikings' and Pippin] se retirèrent.' Both borrowed here directly from F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', n. 4, at p. 492. F. Lot, *Fidèles ou vassaux?*, p. 115, n. 4, showed that 'Ermengaud' was the count of Rouergue and that this assembly of his forces can be placed in June 864; as was also demonstrated by J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 159, p. 168, n. 2.
[6] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 27. For Geary see P. Geary, *Furta sacra*., pp. 123, 141-45.
[7] The expression *Danos seu Normannos* is usually an indicator of a late date of composition.
[8] This was referenced earlier in this chapter, but to repeat (*Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091) and (Paris, 1863), p. 727): 'Tempore quo post domini nostri Jesu Christi incarnationem DCCCLXIIII annos impletus est, obtinente regnum Francorum Carolo rege, filio Ludovici magni imperatoris, grassata est ingens persecutio in ecclesia Christi in regionibus Aquitaniæ seu Gasconiæ. Siquidem paganorum barbaries, quos usitato sermone Danos seu Normannos appellant, a suis sedibus cum innumerabili exeuntes navali gestamine, ad Sanctonicam sive Burdegalensem urbes sunt aduecti. Indeque passim in praefatis discurrentes provinciis, urbes depopulando, monasteria, ecclesias necnon et cunctas hominum aedes igne cremantes, non paruas hominum strages occidendo dederunt.' Note it is nowhere said here that Bordeaux was taken, as is sometimes said

> Les Danois ou Normands, sortant de leurs contrées par le moyen d'innombrables embarcations, se transportent à Saintes ou à Bordeaux. Et depuis là (*indeque*), parcourant les provinces, dépeuplant les villes, incendiant les monastères, les églises et tous les temples des hommes, tuant et ruinant.[1]

I shall return to this report on several occasions later in this work because it is rather problematic.

Then we have what Archbishop Hincmar tells us. Hincmar does not explicitly mention this raid up the Garonne to Toulouse by the Northmen and Pippin II, but under the year 864 he does say that early in the year and in direct connection with the killing of count Stephen at Clermont: 'Pippin, son of Pippin, who had changed back from being a monk to become a layman and an apostate, joined with the Northmen and lived like one of them.'[2] Hincmar is also concerned in the first half of 864 with *missi* sent by Charles the Bald on two separate occasions to try to repress Hunfrid's revolt and his seizure of Toulouse.[3] Later in the same year when reporting Pippin's capture by the 'Aquitanians' he says that the 'apostate Pippin' had been removed from his 'association with the Northmen' and was then taken to Pîtres where he was 'condemned as a traitor to his fatherland' and 'sentenced to death'.[4]

A great deal of scholarly ink has been spilled on the subject of Pippin's supposed apostasy. The best modern review and assessment of the subject has been provided by Pierre Bauduin,[5] which I will not repeat in detail here. In summary, Hincmar's naming of Pippin as an apostate was probably because he had earlier been tonsured as a monk but had abandoned his clerical profession,[6] not because he had abandoned his Christian religion and followed that of the

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(see for example L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 324; C. Higounet, *Histoire d'Aquitaine* (Toulouse, 1973), p. 150), in fact it is very unlikely it was. *Advecti* here means 'brought to', or more loosely that they directed themselves towards. J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg', p. 183, says: 'À propos du raid de 863, une source du début du XIe siècle rapporte que sortant de leurs lieux de séjour avec une flotte innombrable les Vikings se dirigèrent vers Saintes et Bordeaux: *A suis sedibus cum innumerabili exeuntes navali gestamine, ad Sanctonicam sive Burdegalensem urbes sunt advecti*.' The same interpretation is proposed by A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 52 and n. 181, and F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 27.

[1] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 27.

[2] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 105; trans. Nelson, p. 111.

[3] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, pp. 105, 112-3; trans. Nelson, pp. 111, 118.

[4] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 115; trans. Nelson, p. 119.

[5] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 328-38.

[6] *Ibid*., pp. 329, 336; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 324-25, n. 56; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 111, n. 3; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 64-65; *idem*, 'The rod of God's wrath or the people of God's wrath? The Carolingian theology of the Viking invasions', p. 546. For Pippin's tonsuring as a monk at Soissons and his subsequent escape see *AB* 852, 853, 854: ed. Grat, pp. 64-65, 66, 69; trans. Nelson, pp. 74-75, 76, 79.

Northmen[1] or even because he had allied with the Northmen[2] which was not such an unusual event.[3]

In short, what we do know is that a Scandinavian fleet - and it was not necessarily a particularly large one despite the debatable *Translatio sanctae Faustae* using the *topos* 'innumerable ships' - had come with Pippin II first to the Gironde[4] and then moved up the Garonne to Toulouse, from where after a very perfunctory siege lasting only a few days they had quickly withdrawn probably because of illness but certainly with Pippin still in tow.

Similar to what had happened at Clermont in 863 the *marchio* of Gothia, Hunfrid, had 'grabbed Toulouse from Raymund, and usurped it for himself'.[5] Hincmar adds that 'he did so without King Charles's knowledge, by a conspiracy, in the usual way of the Toulousians, who are always withdrawing that city's allegiance from their counts'. Raymond had probably been killed during or slightly after this usurpation of Toulouse.[6]

This 'conspiracy' theory was indeed the case in so far as both Stephen's revolt and takeover of Clermont and that of Hunfrid at Toulouse took place at the time and in the context of the brief rebellion of Charles the Bald's son Charles the Young, as has been explored and explained by both Calmette and Auzias.[7]

Toulouse had previously been a part of Pippin's Aquitanian realm but he had lost any control over it in late 849 when it was captured by Charles the Bald;[8] and by late 863 and early 864 Pippin had fallen far and was a desperate fugitive with little following. His joining with the Northmen had been his last throw of the dice and it had failed.[9]

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[1] As suggested by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Vikings in Francia', in J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Early Medieval History: Collected Essays of J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 217-36, at pp. 226-27.
[2] As maintained by J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 156, n. 2. See also F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 491, n. 1.
[3] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 324-25, n. 56.
[4] As just mentioned above it is very unlikely that Bordeaux was once again taken in this year.
[5] *AB* 863: ed. Grat, p. 97; trans. Nelson, p. 105.
[6] F. Lot, *Fidèles ou vassaux ? Essai sur la nature juridique du lien qui unissait les grands vassaux à la royauté depuis le milieu du IXe jusqu'à la fin du XIIe siècle* (Paris, 1904), p. 99; J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 170, n. 3; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 318 and n. 36.
[7] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 158-74; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 317-27.
[8] *ChrFont* 849: ed. Laporte, pp. 82-83.
[9] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 171: 'Si l'on replace l'aventure de 864 dans son ambiance historique, elle apparaît comme un dernier sursaut de Pépin II, dont la vie, depuis plusieurs années, était celle d'un prétendant déchu, traqué et dépouillé. Se faire le capitaine d'une bande de Normands, c'était un geste de désespoir'; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 324: 'Réduit aux abois, traqué, pourchassé, Pépin ne renonçait point cependant. C'est dans les Normands qu'il plaça son suprême espoir.'

The precise course of events involving Toulouse in the first months of 864 and particularly its chronology is rather obscure and requires interpretation. The most thorough and compelling analysis is that of Joseph Calmette.[1]

Briefly put, by January 864 King Charles had returned from Nevers to Compiègne from where 'he sent *missi* to Gothia to receive the submission of the *civitates* and fortresses there'.[2] Janet Nelson says: 'This mission was clearly linked with the suppression of Hunfrid's revolt.'[3] But the mission returned later 'having accomplished little of what they had set out to do'.[4] According to Calmette it is possible that these first *missi* had arrived when 'le Midi' was 'en pleine crise' and 'peut-être le *parum* - le peu que les missi ont fait […] consiste-t-il à avoir suscité cette prise d'armes d'Ermengaud, comte d'Albi'.[5] Whatever the case, Hunfrid, the marquis of Gothia, was still holding Toulouse when the Northmen accompanied by Pippin II arrived.[6] It was after the short siege of the city and the Northmen's withdrawal that Charles then sent another group of *missi* to Toulouse and into Gothia to receive the *civitates* and fortresses there, this time with more success.[7] But in Calmette's opinion Hunfrid had already swiftly fled before the second group of *missi* arrived, and he then travelled via Provence to Italy,[8] after which he is never heard of again. Hunfrid had realised that after he had been deserted by many of his fickle supporters in Toulouse when the Northmen had arrived, and with Count Stephen now dead and the young Charles now reconciled with his father, the game was up, and that he also knew that he would never be pardoned for his usurpation of Toulouse and the killing of Count Raymond the year before.[9]

Shortly thereafter the Northmen may have abandoned Pippin II who was soon captured by the Aquitanians, probably in May,[10] by a ruse or trick according to Hincmar (*ab Aquitanis*

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[1] J. Calmette 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 162-74, closely followed by L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 324-26. Calmette's analysis is itself an elaboration of Vogel's *Reihenfolge*, for which see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 200-1. F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 492, n. 5, has a somewhat different interpretation regarding the precise chronology, particularly of the *missi*, but nothing really that makes any difference to our study of the Northmen in this year.
[2] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 105; trans. Nelson, p. 111.
[3] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 111, n. 1.
[4] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, pp. 112-13; trans. Nelson, p. 118.
[5] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 168. Calmette is closely followed by L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 325-26.
[6] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 169-74.
[7] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, pp. 104-5; trans. Nelson, p. 111; J. Calmette 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 173-74; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 327, n. 65: 'Le succès des seconds missi est attesté par le fait qu'en 865 le roi put disposer à son gré de l'Aquitaine.'
[8] Cf. *AB* 864: ed. Grat, pp. 112-13; trans. Nelson, p. 118.
[9] J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', pp. 173-74, my translation.
[10] Calmette dates Pippin's capture to May 864 (*ibid*., pp. 160, 166), as does F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 493, n. 1. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 202, places his capture in May or June.

ingenio capitur),[1] and by Ramnulf (I) Count of Poitou according to the tenth-century Continuator of Ado of Vienne,[2] although these two reports are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

If as already suggested the Northmen who had attacked Poitiers in December had then gone on to Toulouse with Pippin II in tow early the next year, then it was obviously these very same Northmen who Charles the Bald had ordered the Aquitanians, who must have included Ramnulf of Poitiers, to advance against. Clearly Ramnulf and/or other Aquitanian magnates had not managed to catch up with these Northmen. As Lot puts it: 'Sa campagne, hypothétique, en Aquitaine fut de courte durée, car il était présent à l'assemblée de Pîtres de juin 864'; but perhaps it was during Ramnulf's quest to punish the Northmen responsible for the attack on his town that he had found Pippin, and, as Lot puts it, 'il rendit à son seigneur un signalé service en s'emparant, par trahison, de la personne de Pépin et en l'amenant à cette assemblée de Pîtres'.[3] It is not however out of the question that the Northmen who had been with Pippin at Toulouse, and had left with him after the siege,[4] had subsequently handed him over to Ramnulf and this is what Hincmar was referring to by saying that he was removed from his association with the Northmen' (*a Nortmannorum collegio*) and his reference to a trick or ruse.[5]

After his capture by Count Ramnulf or by other some other 'Aquitanians' Pippin 'was presented before the assembly at Pîtres' in June 864, 'and having been condemned by the leading men of the realm as a traitor to his fatherland and to Christianity, and then sentenced to

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[1] *AB* 864: Grat, p. 113; trans. Nelson, p. 119: 'The Aquitanians by a trick captured the apostate Pippin, and removed him from his association with the Northmen.'

[2] Continuator of Ado of Vienne, *De sex aetatibus mundi*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH, Scriptores*, 2 (Hanover, 1829), p. 324.

[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 485, n. 1.

[4] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *Translatio sancti Vincentii*, book 2, chap. 12, p. 768.

[5] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 327, assumes as a fact that 'Rannoux tendit une embuscade à une bande normande au milieu de laquelle se trouvait Pépin II et captura l'irréconcilliable prince'. This is a view followed by P. Bauduin (*Le monde franc*, p. 328): 'À la suite de cet échec [at Toulouse], Pépin II gagna le nord-ouest de l'Aquitaine où opéraient d'autres bandes scandinaves. Il tomba dans un piège tendu à l'une d'entre elles par Ramnulf Ier de Poitiers, qui le livra à Charles le Chauve.' This whole idea of a 'piège' goes back to F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 492-93; although Lot does not have Pippin being with a band of Northmen. Yet there simply was no 'bande normande', or even some 'autres bandes scandinaves' operating in north-western Poitou in the spring of 864. The only band of Northmen who could have been accompanying Pippin when he was captured was the same band he had gone with to Toulouse. Auzias (*ibid*., p. 326) - and perhaps implicitly Bauduin - assume that after Toulouse the Northmen involved had gone east to Rodez; but as will be discussed shortly this was unlikely so. The idea of an *embuscade* or a *piège* is in my view just imagination; the trick or ruse mentioned by Hincmar more likely involved Pippin's erstwhile allies handing him over to Count Ramnulf. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 64, suggests, as I do, that after Toulouse: 'The Vikings subsequently returned to the Loire and probably to Poitou, where Pippin was captured 'perfide deceptus' in May.' However, Coupland (*ibid*.) still seems to think that the Northmen had in the interim gone to Rodez, which makes no chronological (or historical) sense because as will be shown this supposed raid to Rodez had lasted three years and it had nothing at all to do with the Northmen who had besieged Toulouse in early 864.

death by the general assembly, he was held in strictest custody at Senlis'.[1] He must have died there shortly after.[2]

But if Pippin's situation was so desperate by late 863 or early 864, which I think it was, how had he induced a Scandinavian fleet/warband to join him in an endeavour to take Toulouse? Pippin was in no position to pay them an appropriate *locarium* as mercenaries and his own military strength was probably by now quite minimal.

As was hinted at before, in my opinion the Northmen who accompanied Pippin to Toulouse were possibly those who had returned from Spain in late 861 or early 862. Why?

It will be remembered that it had been these very same Northmen who had joined with Pippin to make a successful attack on Poitiers in 857. What might have happened, and I admit that this is just conjecture although the circumstantial evidence is interesting, is that the greater part of the Northmen who had returned from Spain, in fact those who had *not* been employed by the Breton Salomon in early 862 and who had quickly been destroyed by Robert the Strong, had after Salomon's reconciliation with Charles the Bald subsequently sought an outlet for their services or just for their avarice and gone back to their usual raiding ways by attacking Poitiers. It is even conceivable that Pippin had induced these Northmen to attack Poitiers in December 863. Janet Nelson says that the 'Loire Vikings who had attacked Poitiers in 863 [...] may already have been allied with Pippin II'.[3] I hesitate to propose this but it is certainly not out of the question and it does have a certain logic. Ramnulf I of Poitiers was a strong supporter of Charles and Pippin would have loved to take the city again as he had six years earlier in 857 with the Northmen's help.

But whatever had been the case, soon thereafter it is quite sure that Pippin did actually ally with some Loire Northmen to go to Toulouse, held since 863 by the 'rebel' Hunfrid, the marquis of Gothia who was certainly no ally of Pippin.[4] Aimoin of Saint-Germain's words in the

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[1] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 113; trans. Nelson, p. 119. Hincmar also wrote a letter concerning the affair of Pippin that was to be heard at the assembly of Pîtres: see *Hincmari archiepiscopi Remensis epistolarum pars prior*, *MGH*, *Espistolae Karolini Aevi*, 6, no. 170, pp. 163-65, and also *Hincmari consilium de poetententia Pippini regis*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *PL*, 125, col. 1119-22. J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 160, says that Hincmar 'joue personellement le rôle d'accusateur de Pépin' at the *plaid* of Pîtres, although J. Devisse, *Hincmar, archevêque de Reims, 845-882* (Geneva, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 357, 359, n. 395, suggests Hincmar 'ne paraît pas avoir envisagé de se rendre à Pîtres', for which see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 330, n. 3.

[2] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 328.

[3] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 111, n. 2.

[4] As proposed by L. Levillain, 'La translation des reliques de saint Austremoine', pp. 315, n. 3: '*Huntfridus* abandonna brusquement Toulouse et la Gothie vers le mois de mai 864 pour se réfugier en Italie, c'est-à-dire à l'époque même où Pépin II et ses partisans traqués tombaient aux mains des partisans de Charles le Chauve. La concordance des dates donne à croire que *Huntfridus* était, lui aussi, un partisan de Pépin II, et ce dernier n'aurait eu alors aucun intérêt à conduire lui-même les Normands sous les murs de Toulouse.' This idea was convincingly refuted by J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', esp. pp. 157-58, 162-63.

Translatio sancti Vicentii have suggested to most subsequent commentators that Pippin had hired the Northmen to accompany him to Toulouse to try to take the town,[1] although Aimoin's words are not really so clear on this point and they probably more indicate that the Northmen had taken Pippin with them as a guide.[2] But regardless of this, whilst Aimoin had heard about the siege of Toulouse that had involved Pippin and the Northmen he would have had no idea what the prior background to such an alliance had been. As a Frank based on the Seine he would naturally have given the initiative and lead to the Carolingian Pippin. But maybe what had really happened is that Pippin had persuaded the Northmen on the Loire to go to Toulouse, which was in a state of turmoil following Hunfrid's usurpation, telling them of what they might gain by so doing. From the Northmen's perspective using Pippin as a guide and a nominal royal figurehead, we might even say as a potential 'puppet king', might have appealed. Thus, who was really using who here remains an open and ultimately unanswerable question.

Attacks on Rodez?

For the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that it has sometimes been suggested that after besieging Toulouse in early 864 the Northmen involved then moved on to the Rouergue, far to the east, and unsuccessfully stormed the town of Rodez twice over the course of three years. This idea must be rejected. It was first proposed by Walther Vogel in 1906:

> Kaum, daß wir auch nur ihren ungefähren Umfang zu bestimmen vormögen. So sind die Normannen, einer vereinzelten Nachricht zufolge [the *Vita sancti Amantii*], noch weit östlich über Toulouse hinaus vorgedrungen und haben Rodez in der Rovergue zweimal innerhalb dreier Jahre, doch ohne Erfolg, bestürmt. Über den Zeitpunkt wird nichts

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 201, says the Northmen were 'von Pippin in Sold genommen'. F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 490-91, follows Vogel by saying that Pippin 'prit à sa solde des Normands païens', and also uses the expressions 'Pépin, avec son armée païenne' and 'Pépin et ses auxiliaires'. J. Calmette, 'Le siège de Toulouse', p. 154, says that, 'les Normands […] vinrent jusqu'à Toulouse, conduits par le roi d'Aquitaine, Pépin II, qui les avait soudoyés'; and that the Northmen 'ont été conduits par Pépin qui les a pris à son service et s'est placé à leur tête'. The whole direction of thought here is that Pippin had hired the Northmen and had led them. L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 325-26, similarly says that 'pendant l'hiver de 864' Pippin was 'à la tête d'une flotte de pirates', and that Toulouse was 'assiégé par les Normands de Pépin II'. Although elsewhere (*ibid*., pp. 324-25), he says 'les Normands trouvèrent de nouveau pour les guider un chef qui connaissait parfaitement la région et ses ressources pour l'avoir gouvernée longtemps : Pépin II […]. Pris comme guide par les Normands de la Garonne, il crut qu'il lui serait aisé de reconquérir Toulouse dont Humfroi s'était emparé […]'.
[2] For this opinion see *inter alia* P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 328; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 63, where he talks more of an 'alliance'; J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, p. 50.

berichtet, doch geschah es zweifellos Anfang der 60er Jahre, veilleicht in Zusammenhang mit dem Toulouser Zug.[1]

Although we may only barely be able to determine their appoximate reach/extent, according to a single report the Northmen pushed far east of Toulouse and twice within three years attacked Rodez in the Rouergue, but with no success. Regarding the dating nothing is reported, but this doubtless happened at the beginning of the 860s, perhaps in relation with the Toulouse raid.[2]

Ferdinand Lot very clearly followed Vogel a few years later in saying that after the siege of Toulouse: 'La Rouergue fut mis à sac, Rodez assiégé.'[3] This whole idea is based on an erroneous interpretation of a *Life and Miracles of Saint Amans* of Rodez written by an unknown author at an unknown time but certainly well before the third quarter of the ninth century,[4] which says:

Rursus cum adversus Ruthenenses Marcomanni[5] truces ingruerent omnemque late provinciam belli nube texissent, - atroci etenim corona cinxerant civitatem -, horrebant murorum interiecto discrimine strictis mucronibus. Addebat etiam fiduciam hostibus

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 201-2; and at p. 201, n. 4, Vogel states that: 'Die Nachricht beweist daß die Vita frühestens ins 9., nicht wie der Herausgeber Krusch annimmt, ins 8. Jahrh. zu setzen ist', 'The report proves that the Vita can be placed at the earliest in the ninth century and not as the editor Krusch assumed the eighth century.'
[2] My translation.
[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 491 and n. 3. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 64, follows both Vogel and Lot in saying that after the siege of Toulouse: 'It appears that they [the Northmen] headed east, since the monks of Castres fled at their approach, although the monastery does not appear to have been attacked. The Vikings perhaps then fought the Franks at Connac on the river Tarn, although the forged charter which refers to this engagement may not have any basis in fact. More probable is that the army went on to attack Rodez, but having ravaged the vicinity the Northmen apparently withdrew without having captured the town itself. The Vikings subsequently returned to the Loire, and probably to Poitou, where Pippin was captured 'perfide deceptus' in May.' It is to Jean Renaud's credit (see J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, p. 49) that he just poses the question, 'Les Vikings ont-ils assiégés Rodez ?'
[4] F. Prévot, 'L'utilisation de la mémoire du passé à travers quelques vies de saints aquitains', in M. Sartre and C. Sotinel (eds.), *L'usage du passé entre Antiquité tardive et Haut Moyen Âge. Hommage à Brigitte Beaujard* (Rennes, 2015), pp. 105-31, at p. 105, says that, 'La datation de la *vita*, texte longtemps attribué à tort à Fortunat, est controversée. Elle est en tout cas vraisemblablement antérieure aux Martyrologes de Florus (second quart du IXe siècle) et d'Adon (vers 855) qui précisent, le 4 novembre, à propos de saint Amans : *cuius uita sanctitatae et miraculis extitit gloriosa*. B. Krusch, suivi par L. Duchesne, ne la croit pas antérieure au VIIIe siècle, alors que Riché la date du VIIe siècle et A. Debat du début du VIIe siècle'. Prévot also gives all the relevant references.
[5] Other manuscripts have quite different readings here, for which see F. Prévot, 'L'utilisation de la mémoire du passé', p. 127.

multitudo ingens, natura ferox, quorum fugam sternebat passim dira lues immiti ense, fame obscena.[1]

Les féroces Marcomans, s'étant déchaînés contre les Ruthènes, couvrirent au loin toute la province, comme une nuée orageuse. Ces hordes barbares firent le siège de la ville et les remparts retentissaient de leurs cris sauvages et du cliquetis de leurs épées nues. Ils étaient pleins de jactance à cause de leur multitude innombrable et leur aspect était farouche et tous fuyaient au loin devant ce fléau dévastateur qui massacrait tout impitoyablement et qui, par ses ravages, causait une cruelle famine.[2]

These 'Marcomans' were eventually forced to flee because of a miraculous intervention of Saint Amans.[3] Then three years later they returned:

Peracto itaque triennio hoc quo prius veniunt furore succensi, hac saeviunt immanitate bacchantes, ex hoc redeunt miraculo commoniti hocque fugiunt pavore perculsi et ita pastor egregius gregem suum ab incursu luporum bis eruit una virtute.[4]

Trois ans plus tard, ils reviennent, animés de la même fureur, et se livrent aux mêmes transports d'une férocité monstrueuse. Mais ils subissent l'impression du même miracle et la même frayeur précipite leur fuite. Ainsi, ce père incomparable, par un même prodige, délivra deux fois son troupeau de l'incursion des loups ravisseurs.[5]

The author of the *Life of Saint Amans* knew precisely nothing about the person of Saint Amans, but more importantly the *Life* is clearly reporting supposed *repeated* attacks on Rodez in the post-Roman era and not in the ninth century.[6] Françoise Prévot has convininglyshown that

[1] *Vita sancti Amantii*, *MGH*, *Auctores antiquissimi*, 4. 2 (Berlin, 1885), pp. 55-64, at § 87, p. 63. F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 491, n. 3, says about this, 'Ce texte, qui ne renferme aucune donnée chronologique, ne peut être rapporté, semble-t-il, qu'à l'année 864', which Prévot has convincingly shown is not correct.
[2] F. Prévot, 'L'utilisation de la mémoire du passé', p. 127.
[3] For which see *Vita sancti Amantii*, §§ 89-91, p. 63; F. Prévot, 'L'utilisation de la mémoire du passé', p. 129.
[4] *Vita sancti Amantii*, § 92, p. 63.
[5] F. Prévot, 'L'utilisation de la mémoire du passé', p. 130.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 107: 'Les auteurs de vies de saints utilisent parfois des souvenirs du passé romain pour évoquer le cadre chronologique dans lequel a vécu leur héros. Dans la *vie de s. Amans,* ces souvenirs sont très flous car l'auteur ne sait rien de précis sur son personnage. Il ne dit même pas que c'est le premier évêque de la cité […]. On voit seulement que le saint vit à l'époque romaine parce qu'il y a des païens dans la cité ; ceux-ci refusent que le saint abatte les idoles qui se dressent l'une en dehors de la ville (§ 12-25), l'autre sur le forum (§ 32-33). À chaque fois, un miracle permet à l'évêque de convertir et de baptiser la foule. Le seul fait que le saint veuille s'attaquer aux idoles prouve que l'auteur ne place pas son héros au temps des persécutions mais à l'époque de l'Empire chrétien.'

these attacks on Rodez took place in the late Visigothic era (in France), thus in the early sixth century and decidedly not three and a half centuries later; her excellent analysis is well worth reading in full.

Some other thoughts on origins

The fleet that arrived on the Loire from the Seine in the spring of 862 was a considerable one. When Weland had come to the Seine in 861 after his short and rather disastrous sojourn in England, and after wintering elsewhere, possibly in Frisia, his fleet had grown and it now consisted of over 200 ships; another sixty shiploads seem to have subsequently arrived to support him. When Sidroc had arrived on the Seine in 856 the chronicler of Fontenelle says he led a 'very large fleet of Danes'. When Bjørn arrived a little later he came 'with a substantial fleet'. Sidroc seems to have left the Seine in 857 but Bjørn stayed on longer. In 858 Prudentius called him the 'chief of one group of the pirates on the Seine' when he came to Charles the Bald at Verberie and 'gave himself into his hands and swore fidelity after his own fashion',[1] which implies that there were other groups active on the river in 858, immediately after which he says that 'another group of those pirates' ('Pars altera eorundem pyratarum'), under whose leadership we are not told, 'captured Abbot Louis of St-Denis along with his brother Gauzlin, and demanded a very heavy fine for their ransom'.

Clearly Bjørn's fleet was not the only one on the Seine at this time. Whatever the total number of ships and warriors involved on the Seine in the late 850s and early 860s it was a very powerful force. Even if we lowball the Oissel Northmen's fleet size to fifty ships - and the number could have been much higher - and take no account of the various other groups which had been on the Seine before Weland had arrived, then the combined fleet that thereafter split in late March 862 may even have amounted to three hundred ships or more.[2] If we take Hincmar's comment that 'most' of the flotillas just means somewhat over half this force, then the fleet that arrived on the lower Loire in the spring of 862 from the Seine quite likely numbered, let us say, 150-170 ships, and maybe more if all of Weland's fleet had stayed together.[3] If the fleet that had come back from Spain slightly before, perhaps in late 861, amounted to more than the twelve ships hired by Salomon to fight Robert the Strong in early 862, which were quickly destroyed by him, then a conservative estimate of the number of Scandinavian ships on the lower Loire in early 862 might have been in the region of two hundred and possibly more.

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[1] *AB* 858: ed. Grat, pp. 76-77; trans. Nelson, p. 86.
[2] Adding up the numbers mentioned above.
[3] Remember Weland's fleet on the Seine in 861 numbered over 200 ships and 60 more had joined him.

The point of this for our present purpose is that such numbers were certainly quite sufficient for these Scandinavians to have later split into two or three groups; one that made the attack on Toulouse in the spring of 864 with Pippin II in tow, another which had raided eastwards across Aquitaine to Clermont a little before, and, perhaps, another group, perhaps under Weland, which stayed behind on the Loire at least until the end of 863.

This is what I have already concluded happened. Both of the raids to Clermont and Toulouse were undertaken by fleets coming from the Loire. Of course, this is just one possibility although I suggest it is the most reasonable one; but which parts did what is still quite unclear. Let us now consider the views of some other scholars.

Walther Vogel's scenario is somewhat confusing. Vogel was of the opinion that after Salomon had been reconciled with King Charles (at Entrammes in early 863), and the earlier return of Robert the Strong to the king's fold, plus the submission of Charles's briefly rebellious son Charles the Young late in 863, and also recognising that Pippin II had found support or safety with Salomon and Robert since 859,[1] this meant that the contract Robert the Strong had concluded with the Northmen in the previous year (862) would now have lapsed and the Northmen then soon appeared as enemies once again.[2] But because Robert had in general been able to keep the Northmen in the Loire area in check the Northmen shifted their focus to more southerly regions. They attacked Poitiers and: 'Ferner [meaning here furthermore rather than another] segelte ein teil der Normannen zur Charente oder zur Gironde'[3] - thus from the Loire it seems - where they then fought Count Turpio on 4 October. Vogel then says that as Pippin II no longer had any support from these quarters (from Salomon and Robert) he thus 'wie schon einmal', which refers to 857, made his 'Zuflucht zu den letzten Helfern, die ihm zu Gebote standen - die Normannen',[4] and there can be little doubt that Vogel meant here (some of) the Northmen operating on or near the Loire. Vogel's rather abstruse wording seems to suggest that he might have thought that those Northmen who had gone on to Clermont and those who had gone to Toulouse were two parts of the force that had first arrived in Aquitaine in the autumn of 863.[5] This idea has been picked up by subsequent historians as we shall see.

The views of Ferdinand Lot are important to consider in detail because they have been followed by many later historians. Lot often relied on Vogel and certainly he seems to have

[1] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 90; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 197-99.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 197: 'Durch den Freiden mit den Bretonen wurde natürlich der im vorigen Jahre von Robert mit den Normannen abgeschlossene Vertrag hinfällig, und diese traten den auch gleich als Feinde auf.'
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 197.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 199.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

done so here as well. He suggested that the fleet which came to Aquitaine in the autumn of 863 had split into two; one part based itself on the Charente near Saintes and had pushed into the Angoumois whilst the other part headed for Bordeaux and the Garonne.[1] But unlike Vogel, who proposed a Loire origin, Lot typically says that these Northmen were just 'une nouvelle bande', adding later that they were 'une nouvelle bande, venue on ne sait d'où'.[2] There seems no space in Lot's construction for any involvement of Northmen from the Loire or, before that, from the Seine in the expeditions to Clermont and Toulouse. It has to be said that this is just another striking example of the tendency in the historiography of the Scandinavians in France, and indeed elsewhere, to almost invariably see different groups of *Normands* as being 'of the Seine', 'of the Loire', or even 'of the Charente' or 'of the Garonne/Gironde', and not recognising the almost constant movement of the Scandinavian fleets involved.

Lot's single large fleet arrives in Aquitaine like a *deus ex machina* in the autumn of 863 and it split into two groups. It came from some unknown and unknowable ether before disappearing once again a little later into the mists of the sea. However only a little earlier in the same work Lot had written regarding 863-864 that 'Robert [the Strong] semble être parvenu à protéger la Neustrie pendant deux ou trois ans, mais l'Aquitaine, plus que jamais, fut une proie pour les pirates. Il semblerait que les Normands de la Seine achetés par Robert se soient jetés sur ce pays'.[3] So it seems that after all it was the Northmen from the Seine who had gone to the Loire and been employed by Robert who then threw themselves on Aquitaine. This is eminently reasonable. Yet then, and as just noted, Lot goes on to mention the Northmen coming to Aquitaine in 863 with one part establishing itself on the Charente and the other at Bordeaux and the Garonne, but now these Northmen, who we should remember were the only ones in Aquitaine, suddenly become 'une nouvelle bande' coming from 'on ne sait d'où'.[4] And from now on these Northmen suddenly and miraculously morph into being *Normands de la Charente* and *Normands de la Gironde*. This is all somewhat contradictory.

According to Lot the part of these Northmen which had gone to Clermont had then returned to 'leur station navale sur la Charente',[5] and: 'C'est en effet sur la Charente que nous les retrouverons, commandé par Siegfried, à l'automne de 865.'[6] After mentioning Sigfrid's unsuccessful 'nouvelle incursion' in about October 865, during which as Hincmar tells us four

[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 482-83, 491, n. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 482 and n. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 481. Elsewhere (*ibid.*, p. 478) Lot seems to deny any effective involvement of the Northmen in Robert's protection of Neustria.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 482 and n. 2.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 489.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 489, n. 1.

hundred of them were left dead while 'le reste prit la fuite et regagna la flotte',[1] Lot ends with the statement: 'Depuis lors, on n'entend plus parler des Normands de la Charente' - but where they then went to we are not told.[2] They just disappear. But elsewhere Lot seems to offer another possibility. Those Northmen who had gone with Pippin II to Toulouse, now naturally and subsequently called 'de la Gironde', had remained in or around Bordeaux for some years to come.[3] But elsewhere when talking about 864 after the raids to Clermont and Toulouse Lot says that: 'L'Aquitaine épuisée n'offrait qu'une proie mediocre aux pirates. L'invasion prend une autre direction et se reporte sur la Loire'. He then mentions how Robert the Strong had fought two groups of 'Normands de la Loire' at the end of 864.[4] This is all highly confusing; one might even say muddled. Supposedly Aquitaine was already *épuisée* by 864 and only offered a mediocre *proie* for the Northmen, but as noted already Lot discussed the Northmen on the Charente in 865, and that according to him those Northmen who had gone to Toulouse had remained around the Gironde for some more years. So, who were the Northmen who Lot suggests had found Aquitaine *épuisée* in 864 and had continued their invasion on the Loire - where they rather unsurprisingly suddenly become *Normands de la Loire*! I shall examine the Scandinavians once again operating along the Loire from late 864 a little later in this work, in fact in Chapter 9.

We have given Lot a great deal of attention because his views have been followed by many later historians including Marcel Garaud, Robert Favreau and many others, including even Léonce Auzias. Regarding the trips to Clermont and Toulouse, Léonce Auzias stated:

> Par une coïncidence heureuse, Charles le Chauve eut contre les rebelles des alliés inattendus : les Normands. Ceux-ci, toujours à l'affût des querelles des Carolingiens et des guerres civiles, contenus sur la Loire par la résistance de Robert le Fort, portèrent en 863 leur gros effort sur l'Aquitaine. Vers la fin de l'été des bandes de pirates établirent leurs bases, l'une à l'embouchure de la Charente, l'autre à la Gironde. Les Normands de la Charente se portèrent d'abord sur Saintes, puis sur Angoulême. Là le comte Turpion tenta de résister et succomba dans la lutte (4 octobre 863). Quelque temps après, vers la

[1] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 124; trans. Nelson, p. 128.
[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 498.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 499.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 494.

fin de l'année, c'est Poitiers qui fut menacée : la cité se racheta, mais les grandes abbayes suburbaines furent incendiées.[1]

Auzias again follows Lot here in believing that the (two) groups of 'pirates' had both arrived at the mouth of the Charente and on the Gironde at the same time, in late summer 863. But unlike Lot, Auzias clearly has them both coming from the Loire,[2] supposedly because they had been thwarted on the Loire by Robert the Strong's 'resistance'.[3] I leave to one side the fact that this supposed resistance of Robert to the Northmen on the Loire is something of a scholarly urban myth for which when we look at his record there is no real evidence, and just highlight Auzias's belief that the Northmen's attacks on Clermont and Toulouse were happy coincidences for Charles the Bald, a suggestion that I have already discussed.

In his excellent work *La société laïque dans les pays de la Charente, Xe-XIIe siècles* André Debord proposes quite another view as regards to the origin of the Northmen in Aquitaine from 863: they had been based on the Charente since 845.[4] In brief, Debord has the Northmen arriving in the region in the summer of 844. They were the ones who had sacked Nantes the year before. They then passed Bordeaux on the way to Toulouse and from there left for Spain and Morocco. They returned to Aquitaine in 845 where they defeated and killed Siguin, who was in charge at Bordeaux, before taking the town of Saintes. He then quotes Prudentius as saying that in 845 the Northmen stayed in the area and *tranquillement* installed their camps there: *quietisque sedibus immorunter*. These same 'vikings' then devastated the Aquitanian littoral in 847 and then besieged Bordeaux which was finally taken in March 848. They then pillaged and burned Melle in the same year and in 849 they burned Périgueux. Debord says that it was 'la bande d'Oskar' which took Bordeaux which then went to the Seine in late 851 and then returned to lower Poitou in 852 where they fought at Brillac on 4 November. In 853 they burned Luçon and its monastery and also took Limoges for the first time in 852 or 853, before taking Bordeaux for a second time in 855.

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[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 322-23. This whole presentation is clearly derived from Lot who Auzias references here (p. 322, n. 51) and we can compare it with Lot's statement that, 'Le Normands mettaient à profit les dissensions de famille des Carolingiens', see F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 482, and 'Robert semble être parvenu à protéger la Neustrie pendant deux ou trois ans, mais l'Aquitaine, plus que jamais, fut une proie pour les pirates. Il semblerait que les Normands de la Seine achetés par Robert se soient jetés sur ce pays' (*ibid*., p. 481), and 'Une nouvelle bande portée sur une flotte nombreuse semble avoir envahi à l'automne de l'année 863 le bassin de la Garonne et de la Charente […]. Une partie des envahisseurs semble prendre pour base Saintes et la Charente, l'autre Bordeaux et la Garonne' (*ibid*., p. 482).

[2] Athough as seen above Lot originally had the same idea.

[3] Here Auzias follows both Lot and Vogel.

[4] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, pp. 51-53.

All the above is borrowed in one way or another from the works of Vogel, Lot, Auzias and Garaud, and with a few very notable differences it is much the same as was presented in Chapter 4.

However whilst I do believe that Oskar's Northmen (even if now under new leadership) left Aquitaine in about 858 and probably made the second Scandinavian expedition to the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean, from where they returned to southern Brittany/the lower Loire in late 861 or early 862, Debord then jumps from 855 straight to 'la grande invasion de 863'.[1] He just refers to Ferdinand Lot for the details, but he places the fight in which the 'comte d'Angoulême Turpion' and the chieftain Maurus both died (on 4 October 863) 'en aval de Saintes'.[2] These Northmen then took and destroyed Angoulême, Périgueux and *peut-être* Limoges and arrived at Clermont in 864. They then returned 'à leur station navale sur la Charente', from where in 865 *Siegfrid* attempted a new raid but had to retreat leaving four hundred dead on the field.

Debord's conclusion from all this is that 'depuis 845, on constate une présence presque permanente des Vikings dans la région; par conséquent, la grande invasion de 863 n'est pas une nouveauté, après une longue interruption, réalisé par "une nouvelle bande venue on ne sait d'où"'.[3] Debord is saying that from 845 to 863 the 'Vikings' had stayed in the area, in fact on a base at Taillebourg on the Charente near Saintes: 'Les Normands sont resté longuement dans la région [...] ils y ont possédé des bases stables [...] dont la base principale était certainement Taillebourg'.[4] One must agree with Debord that the invasion of 863 did not come from 'on ne sait d'où'; but from 855 until 863, a gap of about eight years, what had these 'Charente' Northmen supposedly been doing? They certainly find no mention in any annal, chronicle or charter. I suggest we must reject Debord's Charente-centric theory; it no doubt all comes from

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[1] The only thing Debord mentions between 855 and 863 (*ibid*., p. 52) is the case of the supposed destruction of the périgordian monastery of Paunat, which he places in 860. But such a date is far from certain, as indeed is whether the monks really fled because of any activities of Northmen in the vicinity.

[2] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 53. But he correctly notes (*ibid*., p. 53, n. 181): 'Cette précision (*ultra Santonas*) est donnée seulement par l'*Historia Pontificum et comitum Engolismensium*. Rédigée vers 1159, elle suit de très près Adémar de Chabannes qui suit ici le *Chronicon Aquitanicum* et les *Annales Engolismenses*. Cette précision ne se trouve pas dans ces textes et le rédacteur de l'*Historia* suit ici une tradition inconnue.' But as Karl Ferdinand Werner has demonstrated the author of the *Historia* had no other 'lost' or 'unknown' sources, and thus his embellishment *ultra Santonas* is of no independent historical worth: see K. F. Werner, 'Ademar von Chabannes und die Historia pontificum et comitum Engolismensium', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 19 (1963). J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg', p. 184, rather acerbically says: 'Sans tenir compte de cette analyse prudente d'André Debord, Jean Renaud n'hésite pas à écrire : "*L'Histoire des évêques et comtes d'Angoulême*, rédigée au milieu du XIIe siècle par un chanoine de la cathédrale d'Angoulême, précise que le comte Turpion rencontra les Normands en aval de Saintes. On pense à Taillebourg,"' referencing J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charent à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, pp. 43-44.

[3] Here he is referencing Ferdinand Lot and using his words.

[4] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 53. His conception of a long-term 'Viking' base at Taillebourg is laid out on pp. 53-55. For a good but highly critical discussion of this matter see J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg'.

his own separation of the *Normands* 'on the Charente' from those 'on the Loire' etc., and he does not even mention the raid of the Northmen and Pippin II to Toulouse in early 864.

Once one starts to consider 'connections' between the Loire, the Seine, the Charente, the Garonne and other places, which are the subject of the present study, then there is no need to quietly ignore an eight-year period when Northmen apparently sat on their base on the Charente without doing anything before stirring themselves again in 863 to devastate the whole region. Indeed, Debord also believes Northmen stayed permanently on and around the Charente until the early tenth century when the area was 'reconquered', although their raids were less virulent,[1] but this is nonsensical with no supporting evidence and thus I will not pursue it further here.

Lastly, Simon Coupland holds the same opinion as I do regarding the origin of the Northmen who had taken Pippin with them to Toulouse; they came from the Loire: 'Another Viking fleet entered the Gironde in late 863, and besieged Toulouse in alliance with the renegade Pippin II early the following year.'[2] In opposition to Lot's opinion that 'this was a hitherto unknown fleet which then remained in the area for many years',[3] Coupland maintains that 'a more likely alternative is that Toulouse was besieged by the Vikings from the Loire, who had travelled south to the Garonne with their ally Pippin. This interpretation is consistent with the complete lack of references either to the presence of a fleet on the Garonne after 864 or to any Viking activity on the Loire during the first half of that year. Furthermore, it was the Loire Vikings with whom Pippin formed an alliance in 857, and it was in their usual theatre of operations that he was captured later in 864 since his captor was Count Ramnulf of Poitou'.[4]

On the other hand, Coupland offers no suggestion as to where the Northmen who had arrived in the Angoumois/on the Charente in the autumn of 863 had come from. This is probably because, as was touched on a little earlier, and as is discussed more extensively in Appendix 2, he thinks that the Northmen still on the Loire in 863 had been involved in making a major incursion into northern Neustria.[5] This leads him to be able to say: 'It was evidently not the Loire Vikings who entered the Charente in the autumn [of 863] and ravaged the Angoumois. This is above all apparent from the fact that Hincmar later explicitly distinguished between the "Nortmanni reidentes in Ligeri" and the "Nortmannis qui in Carento ... resident"'.[6] As I say in Appendix 2 the fact that Archbishop Hincmar does mention two fleets on the Loire and the Charente in 865 is

[1] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, pp. 53-58.
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 63.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] *Ibid*., pp. 61-62.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 62.

of no relevance at all to matters two years earlier in 863. Furthermore, I doubt if any historian would suggest that sometime in late 863 the Northmen ravaging the Angoumois had broken-off to make an incursion into northern Neustria. If as I argue there was no incursion from the Loire into northern Neustria in 863 then this certainly clears space for Maur's (and Sigfrid's) Northmen coming from the Loire, which I propose they did.

Sigfrid's defeat in 865

Turning now to Sigfrid's Northmen; after attacking Clermont they seem to have returned to a base or bases on the Charente where we find a report of them in 865. According to Hincmar in a later part of this year, perhaps in about October or November:[1]

> Aquitani confligentes cum Nortmannis qui in Carento Sigefrido duce resident, quadringentos circiter ex eis occiderunt; ceteri autem fugientes ad suas naues redierunt.[2]

> The Aquitanians fought with the Northmen based on the Charente under their chieftain Sigfrid, and slew about 400 of them: the rest fled back to their ships.[3]

Who were these 'Aquitanians' who had managed to inflict this defeat on Sigfrid? One possibility is that they had included Emeno who had been appointed count of Angoulême following Turpio's death in 863,[4] and perhaps also Landric supposedly the count of Saintes at the time.[5] Another possibility which does not exclude the first is that Immo the count of Périgord

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 211, would place this fight in October or November of 865.
[2] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 124.
[3] *AB* 865: trans. Nelson, p. 128.
[4] For Emeno and his family see S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque au miroir des récits hagiographiques des pays d'Olt et de Dordogne (Xe-XIe siècles)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Paris IV Sorbonne, 2011), pp. 1236-38; É. de Saint-Phalle, 'Comtes de Troyes et de Poitiers au IXe siècle : histoire d'un double échec', in C. Settipani and K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (eds.), *Onomastique et Parenté dans l'Occident médiéval* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 154-70, at pp. 157-61.
[5] Landric/Landeric (often called *Landry* in modern French) is a name that repeatedly appears in the family of the counts of Quercy in southerly Limousin; which might point back to a connection with a count of Velay (dep. Haute-Loire) called Landric before 833: see S. Fray, *ibid*. p. 1145, and also F. Aubel, 'Les comtes de Quercy (fin VIIIe-début Xe siècle)', *Annales du Midi: revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 109. 219-20 (1997), pp. 309-35. Without citing any real 'proof' as such, C. Settipani, 'Les origines des comtes de Nevers: nouveaux documents', in C. Settipani and K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (eds.), *Onomastique et Parenté dans l'Occident médiéval*, pp. 85-112, at p. 96, suggests that Landric 'of Saintes' may have been the 'Landeric' who was one of the sons of Rodulf Count of Quercy (d. 842) and his wife Aiga, and hence also a brother of the archbishop of Bourges Rodulf (d. 866) as well as of the next count of Quercy called Godfred (*Godefred/Gotafred*). D. Panfili, *Aristocraties méridionales: Toulousain-Quercy: XIe-XIIe siècles* (Rennes, 2010), p. 39, conjectures this Landeric (of Quercy) could have been the abbot of Moissac (dep. Tarn-et-Garonne) known in 857. Yet whether Landric 'of Saintes' was or was not the son of Count Rodulf and his wife Aiga, he was doubtless, it seems eminently reasonable to presume, a member of this very family.

and/or even his son Arnald were involved.[1] It should also be noted that both Saintes and Angoulême are situated on the Charente where Sigfrid's Northmen were now again based, and both Emeno and Landric could certainly be described as 'Aquitanians', the word used by Hincmar.[2] So too with Périgueux on the river Isle, a tributary of the Dordogne; it was also an 'Aquitanian' town.

After Sigfrid's raid to Clermont he and his men headed back to the Charente where we find them in late 865. If he had arrived back there sometime later in 864, we hear nothing more of him for the rest of the year and during the early part of 865. It could be that the Northmen had used these months to rest and regroup but it is not inconceivable that there had been an unrecorded fight or two before their defeat by the 'Aquitanians' later in the year.

In addition, Immo of Périgord had clearly not been able to prevent the eastward progression of the Northmen - now it seems led by Sigfrid - from the Angoumois in late 863, which as we have already seen had probably included a second attack on Périgueux itself although he might have attempted some ultimately vain resistance.

But what might we say about Immo's son Arnald? According to the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* in about 864 Arnald had succeeded his maternal uncle Sancho to the *ducatus* of the Gascons. Sancho, we are told by the *Translatio*, was the brother-in-law of Arnald's father Immo, who was the count of Périgord, because he had married Sancho's sister; we are also told that Arnald had several times fought against the 'barbarians' and killed a lot of them, but that in so doing he had lost most of his own men:

> Eo vero tempore apud Gascones, quibus montes Pyrenaei vicini sunt, ducatus apicem Arnaldus vir illuster obtinebat. Hic etenim, filus cuiusdam comitis Petragoricensis, vocabulo Imonis, fuerat et avunculo suo Sanctioni, qui eiusdem gentis dux fuerat, in principatum successerat. Denique idem Arnaldus saepius cum praefatis barbaris ad defensionem sanctae Ecclesiae praeliando certaverat, et multos ex terra illa atque

[1] Following L. Levillain, 'Adémar de Chabannes, généalogiste', p. 239, it has invariably been assumed by historians that Emeno, the former count of Poitiers, and Immo, the count of Périgord, were one and the same person. That this was not the case has most convincingly been argued by S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque*, pp. 1136-39, who sums up his very detailed analysis with the comment (p. 1139): 'Il convient de renouncer à identifier le comte de Périgord Immon au comte de Poitiers déchu Emenon et de rendre au premier, père du comte Arnaud, son existence propre.' Immo had been count of Périgord since 823 (*ibid*., p. 1138 and nn. 4855, 4856), he was also closely related to the count of Quercy Rodulf (d. 842); according to S. Fray he was most probably a brother of Rodulf's wife Aiga, thus he was among other things the maternal uncle of Archbishop Rodulf of Bourges (d. 866) and Godfred the count of Quercy after his father's death in 866 (*ibid*., pp. 1139-45).

[2] Emeno was to die a little later, in fact in June 866 as a result of the wounds he had received fighting Landric. Landric died as well. I shall discuss this further in a later chapter.

spurcissima natione interficiens, maximam ad ultimum sui nobilissimi exercitus partem amiserat.[1]

Mais à cette époque, chez les Gascons, dont les montagnes Pyrénées sont voisines, Arnaud, homme illustre, obtenait la couronne du duché. En effet, celui-ci avait été le fils d'un certain comte de Périgueux, du nom d'Imon, et il avait succédé au principat à son oncle maternel Sanche, qui avait été duc du même peuple. Bref, le même Arnaud s'était affronté fort souvent avec les susdits barbares [Normands], lors de batailles pour la défense de la sainte Eglise, et, en tuant beaucoup d'individus originaires de cette terre et de cette nation très immonde, à la fin, il avait perdu une très grande part de sa très noble armée.[2]

It might be presumed from this text and from the context that at least some of Arnald's fights with the barbarians had happened in his capacity as the Aquitanian son of his Aquitanian father Immo, the count of Périgord. There also seems no reason to doubt that before being nominated as 'duke of the Gascons' in *c.*864 in succession to his Gascon uncle Sancho, Arnald had been living with or near his father Immo in Aquitaine and thus that his fights with the Northmen probably means in part his involvement in confrontations in western Aquitaine north of the Gironde/Garonne, maybe even alongside his father Immo and perhaps even from late 863 onwards.

According to Renée Mussot-Goulard the writer of the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* did not hold Arnald in particularly high regard.[3] This is according to her because he wrote that when Arnald sent some of his men to Gascony to look for holy relics to replenish the monastery at Solignac[4] he wrote that Arnald sent them to the parts of Gascony that he ruled (*ut partes Gasconiae quas regebat*).[5] Of which Mussot-Goulard says that this was an 'attitude' of 'abandon' on Arnald's part and was an 'Etrange manière de gouverner le pays'.[6] Possibly this was because Arnald was an 'Aquitanian' and not really a true Gascon and that he had only

[1] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727.
[2] Translation M. Pelat, *Les identités ethniques en Novempopulanie, Wasconie et Aquitaine dans l'Antiquité tardive et au haut Moyen âge (IIIe-IXe siècle)*, unpublished Master's dissertation (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2017), available online at https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-01426168, at p. 134, n. 556.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 102 and n. 86.
[4] I discuss this more in Chapter 8.
[5] See *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727.
[6] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 102.

managed to become the 'duke of the Gascons' through the rights of his mother who was the sister of the recently deceased Gascon duke Sancho Sanchez.[1]

It is entirely possible, therefore, that Arnald had been involved in the defeat of Sigfrid's Northmen in 865, perhaps even alongside his Aquitanian father Immo and maybe even the other Aquitanian counts such as Emeno of Angoulême and Landric of Saintes. The *Translatio sanctae Faustae* does say that from 864 as well as perhaps 'attacking' Saintes some Northmen pushed towards Bordeaux and that both provinces (the Saintonge and the Bordelais) were ravaged. It could well be that after returning from Clermont to the Charente Sigfrid's warband had pushed into the Bordelais later in 864 and here been opposed without much success by Arnald whose 'duchy' of the Gascons very probably included Bordeaux itself,[2] or even that Sigfrid's raid later in 865 had itself been into the Bordelais. But this is just conjecture.[3]

Regarding Sigfrid's defeat, in his doctoral thesis *Charles the Bald* Coupland writes: 'The Franks' commander may well have been Duke Arnald of Gascony, who gained considerable renown for his battles against the Northmen' - here he is referencing the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*.[4] This could well be a good inference but as just discussed above if he had been involved in this defeat of the Northmen it was possibly alongside his father Immo, and perhaps also counts Emeno and Landric.

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[1] For the whole complex of Sancho Sanchez etc. see R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 96-101. But her analysis can be, and has been, contested.

[2] See for example F. Lot, *Hugues Capet*, p. 377; L. Levillain, *Les Nibelungen historiques*, II, p 16 and n. 1.

[3] We simply do not know when Arnald died. After telling of Arnald fighting the barbarians, the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727, says: 'Postea vero id implesset nisi inopinata morte praeventus fuisset [...] hic vero dum incolumnis adhuc in suo statu persisteret.' L. Auzias (*L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 353. n. 67) conjectured that Arnald died in one of his fights with the Northmen: 'C'est vers la même époque sans doute, peut-être dès 864, qu'il faut placer le décès du duc de Gascogne, Arnaud [...] c'est probablement au cours de ces luttes qu'il succomba « inopinément ».' This is an opinion explicitly followed by C. Higounet, 'Les Aznar : une tentative de groupement de comtés gascons et pyrénéens au IXe siècle', *Annales du Midi*, 61 (1948), pp. 5-14, at p. (7) 11), who places his death *vers 864*. This view ultimately derives from J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol. 1, pp. 124-25. On the other hand, R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 102 and n. 81, believes that Arnald had not held his *charge* of the Gascon *ducatos* for long after 864, although he had followed his father Emeno [*sic*] as count of Périgueux until his own death in about 871. Regarding this scenario, two points can be noted: Firstly, it implicitly assumes that the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* was written later, at least after 871; secondly, the idea that Arnald had followed his father as count of Périgueux is eminently reasonable, but the dating of his death to 871 is based on a rather unwarranted belief in Ademar of Chabannes regarding Vulgrin's death. Ademar says - but only in the C text it should be noted - that Vulgrin (who died in 886) had governed Périgueux (and in fact Angoulême) for fifteen years; hence 886 minus 15 gives Mussot-Goulard's 871! I shall discuss Vulgrin more in the next chapter. Taking a more non-commital line for once, Ferdinand Lot (*Hugues Capet*, pp. 377-78, n. 2) says, 'Il ne ressort pas de ce texte [of the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*] qu'Arnaud fut mort en 864 comme l'admet Jaurgain, mais qu'il était décédé lors de la rédaction de la *Translatio*. Il fut "inopinata morte praeventus" à une date et dans des circumstances inconnues'.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 68.

Chapter 7

THE CASES OF FROTAR OF BORDEAUX AND ADEMAR OF CHABANNES

Were some bands of Northmen still active in southerly Aquitaine in the years after 865? There are two schools of thought on this matter.[1] The first we might call Walther Vogel's school. After describing Sigfrid's defeat in 'October or November' of 865, Vogel wrote:

> Dies ist das letzte mal, daß wir sichere Kunde von der Anwesenheit von Normannen in so südlichen Gegenden haben: fortan bildete das Gebiet der Loire und ihrer Nebenflüsse die südliche Grenze ihres Wirkungstreifes.[2]
>
> This is the last time when we have any reliable information on the presence of Northmen in so southerly areas: from now on the region of the Loire and its tributaries formed the southern border of their raiding activities.[3]

Although he immediately adds:

> Im Zussamenhang damit steht zweifellos die […] Tatsache, daß gleichzeitig, seit 865 und 866, das nördliche England von den Normannen vollständig überschwemmt wird. England lag ja für die dänischen Auswanderer, deren Absichten sich mehr und mehr auf Landerwerb zu richten begannen, erheblich günstiger.[4]
>
> In this context is doubtless the […] fact that at the same time, since 865 and 866, the North of England was completely overwhelmed by the Northmen. England became substantially more attractive for the Danish emigrants whose intentions began more and more to be directed at land acquisition.[5]

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[1] One might say there are really three schools. The third (if there is one) being that of Renée Mussot-Goulard, which maintains that there was a strong Scandinavian presence not only in western Aquitaine but also in Gascony south of the Garonne both before and after 865. I shall discuss this thesis in a subsequent chapter.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 211.
[3] My translation.
[4] *Ibid*., pp. 211-12.
[5] My translation.

One can see here just one clear example in Vogel's work of from where Lucien Musset derived his idea of a three-stage development of 'viking' activity in the ninth century.[1] But leaving that to one side, I am not at all convinced that any of the Northmen who had arrived in England in 865 or 866 had originated in Aquitaine.[2] Some of the Scandinavians who arrived in England at this time had without much doubt previously been on the Seine in 865 to 866 and had possibly come to England by way of Frisia.[3] Elsewhere I have briefly explored what Sigfrid 'of the Charente' might have subsequently done.[4]

To return to the matter in hand, Coupland closely follows Vogel's presentation. As we have seen in the previous chapter Coupland contends as do I that the Northmen who had gone with Pippin II to Toulouse had then returned to the Loire in 864. Regarding the defeat suffered by Sigfrid's Charente-based Northmen in late 865, which he believes was at the hands of 'Duke Arnald of Gascony', Coupland writes: 'The fact that there are no reliable reports of Scandinavian activity in southern Aquitaine after 865 suggests that Sigfrid's fleet probably left the region soon after this defeat.'[5] But, like Vogel, Coupland offers no suggestion at all as to where Sigfrid's fleet may have gone after leaving the region. Such a perspective, which is invariably based on Vogel's opinion, has also been maintained among others by Marcel Garaud: 'Dès 865, la plus grosse masse des païens paraît s'être retirée de l'Aquitaine pour se porter vers d'autres régions. C'est l'époque où leurs bandes submergent le nord d'Angleterre.'[6]

The other school of thought we might call that of Ferdinand Lot. Lot's view, which with slight modifications has been followed by Auzias[7] and others, was that the Northmen 'de la Gironde', that is those who had gone with Pippin II to Toulouse, had remained active in or around Bordeaux for the next decade or more.[8] Lot's conception, somewhat self-contradictory though it is, is quite explicitly based on his belief in two things: First, the case of Archbishop

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[1] As elaborated in L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)*. I disagree with both Vogel and Musset, and those who have followed them, that from the 860s the Northmen were intent on finding lands to settle, at least in France, but that is another story.

[2] Although it is quite possible that some Northmen from the Loire did come to England but later; for which see Chapter 10.

[3] Cf. S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 17-19; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 213 and n. 128; A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great*, p. 19; R. P. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Culture, and Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998), p. 114; C. Downham, 'Vikings in England to A.D. 1016', in S. Brink with N. Price, (eds.), *The Viking World* (London, 2008), pp. 341-49, at p. 342: P. H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, 2nd edn (London, 1971), p. 101; *idem*, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire. A History of Lincolnshire* 3 (1998), p. 92; S. McLeod, *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England*, p. 132; J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 198-201, 393; H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western* Europe, p. 115.

[4] See S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark'.

[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 68.

[6] M. Garaud, 'Les incursions des Normands en Poitou', p. 257.

[7] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, esp. pp. 352, 377-81.

[8] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 499.

Frotar of Bordeaux in 876 when Frotar claimed he should be allowed to transfer to the archbishopric of Bourges because his remaining at Bordeaux was no longer tenable due to devastations of Northmen, and, second, Ademar of Chabannes's story that after the death of Turpio in late 863 and Emeno and Landric in 866, a count Vulgrin had taken over the counties of Angoulême and Périgueux, and that Vulgrin had fought many times against the Northmen.

Because these two stories are really the only proposed evidence for any Northmen remaining in Aquitaine for many years after 865, we must now examine each of them in turn.

Archbishop Frotar of Bordeaux

A few years after Bordeaux had been attacked for a second time by the Northmen in 855[1] Charles the Bald appointed Frotar to the archdiocese.

This appointment took place a little before 860,[2] possibly even in 858.[3] The metropolitan of Bordeaux presided over other bishops in his ecclesiastical province but there is no reason to believe that Frotar did not establish his seat at Bordeaux itself, from which we can quite confidently infer that the Northmen were not occupying the city at the time.

Between 860 and 875 Frotar was present at most of the important synods in France in which he actively participated, signing charters, letters to the pope and edicts. He was also addressed by other bishops and archbishops. On every occasion Frotar is referred to as Archbishop or sometimes just Bishop of Bordeaux.[4] He is similarly so described in a letter of Pope Nicholas I written in 867.[5] In addition, from 860 onwards Archbishop Hincmar always refers to him as the archbishop of Bordeaux both in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*[6] and in his letters.[7] During this whole period - or at least until 876 - Frotar is nowhere referred to as an exile or as having fled his see,

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[1] As was discussed in Chapter 4. Although a second 'capture' of Bordeaux in 855 is usually assumed it is by no means certain.

[2] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 377.

[3] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 144. n. 3, *eadem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 193 and n. 25; *eadem*, 'The reign of Charles the Bald', p. 15. See also *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 199.

[4] Frotar attended the following synods: Tusey 860; Soissons 862; Pîtres 864; Soissons 866; Troyes 867; Verberie 869; Attigny 870; Douzy 871; Chalon-sur-Saône 875; Ponthion 876. For which see *Die Konzilien*, ed. W. Hartmann, pp. 20, 37, 40, 114, 118, 173, 213, 217, 220, 227, 238, 330, 334, 388, 477, 479, 516, 522, 523, 572. Also, for the synod at Chalon-sur-Saône in 875 see *Conventus Cabilonensis*, in *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J.-D. Mansi, vol. 17, col. 300.

[5] *PL*, ed. Migne, vol. 119, col. 1124.

[6] In 868 when Frotar was granted the abbacy of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers Hincmar called him 'Frotario Burdegalensium archiepiscopo' (*AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 142). Even in 876 (twice) concerning his formal transfer to the metropolitan archbishopric of Bourges (*AB* 876: ed. Grat, pp. 202, 204), and yet again in 878 (retrospectively using the same words as in 876) he is called the same thing (*AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 227).

[7] For example, in a letter/treatise written by Hincmar in late 860 to Rodulf the archbishop of Bourges and to Frotar himself concerning the case of Count Stephen, Frotar is addressed as 'Frotario amabili fratri et honorabili Burgegalensium archiepiscopo': *MGH*, *Epistolae*, VIII, no. 136, p. 86. See also J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 196, n. 39.

and nowhere either is it ever mentioned that his archdiocese was infested with Northmen or even threatened by them; although such things were many times a subject of the synods, they always concerned events in Francia or along the Loire. This would seem to suggest that Frotar had been resident at Bordeaux throughout. Furthermore, during all this period Frotar had obviously been quite free to travel from Bordeaux and return there without the slightest hindrance. These facts alone very strongly tell against the interpretation of some historians of the suspect testimony of the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* that Bordeaux was occupied/taken by the Northmen in *c*.864.

There is, however, a widespread view that Frotar had at some point fled Bordeaux because the town itself and his archdiocese had become untenable as his seat because of 'les incessantes incursions des Normands', as Léonce Auzias put it.[1] This flight is usually dated to around 868 or even to before 870,[2] because according to Hincmar following Count Ramnulf of Poitiers's death in 866 the king had taken his *honores* away from his young sons and given one of these, the abbacy of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers, to 'Archbishop Frotar of Bordeaux'.[3] At around the same

[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 377-78.

[2] For example L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 377: 'voisine de 870'; F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 499; L. Levillain, 'Des dates dans les chartes de Nouaillé antérieures à l'an 1000 : à propos d'une publication récente', *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest,* 3. 16 (1940), pp. 177-263, at p. 219.

[3] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 142; trans. Nelson, p. 144: 'Frotarius Burdegalensium archiepiscopo.' Later, possibly in about *c*.875-76, Frotar was possibly also for a short period bishop of Poitiers. In a donation of land and serfs at Neville (dep. Vienne) made to the abbey of Saint-Hilary in February 876 Frotar is called 'venerabilis vir Frotarius episcopus vel abba' (which does not actually say he was bishop 'of Poitiers'): L.-F.-X. Redet, *Documents pour l'histoire de l'église de Saint-Hilaire de Poitiers*, *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaries de l'Ouest*, 14 (1848), p. 10. See also *AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 202; trans. Nelson, p. 191: 'Frotarius Burdegalensis episcopus, quoniam a Burdegala ad Pictauos indeque ad Bituricum fauore principis contra regulas', 'Frotar archbishop of Bordeaux, who had moved from Bordeaux to Poitiers, and from there to Bourges through royal favour but against canonical rules.' The same language is used by Hincmar in 878 (see below): *AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 227; Nelson, p. 210. Also, in a letter written in the late 880s by Pope Stephen V to the bishops of Gaul (Flodoard, *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 13, p. 556): 'pro querimonia Bituricensis ecclesiae super invasione Frotharii, Burdegalensis episcopi, *qui etiam Pictavensem aliquamdiu tenuerat sedem*' (my italics). L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 378 and n. 17, wrongly attributes this letter to Hincmar, but he suggests that Frotar had arranged for himself to become bishop of Poitiers sometime after Bishop Engenold's death in about 872, in which he is following F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 499: 'Frotier sollicita l'évêché de Poitiers et fut au moins évêque désigné.' In 1940, Léon Levillain also suggested Frotar was very briefly bishop of Poitiers: see L. Levillain, 'Des dates dans les chartes de Nouaillé', pp. 218-22, as have the editors of the *Annales de Saint-Bertin* (at p. 142, n. 3), and J. L. Nelson, *Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 192, n. 9. However nowhere at all in all the contemporary letters, charters and annals which mention his transfer from Bordeaux to Bourges (even via Poitiers) is it said that he was or had been bishop of Poitiers, except perhaps in Pope Stephen V's much later letter which is clearly based on information still held at Rome concerning the synod of Ponthion a decade or so before. The most natural interpretation of the expression 'etiam Pictavensem aliquamdiu tenuerat sede' is indeed that Frotar had also *for a while* held the see of Poitiers, but even this is not clear. L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 378, says: 'Résidait-il [Frotar] déjà à Poitiers lorsqu'il reçut dans la région d'importants bénéfices de la faveur du roi ? Ou bien choisit-il cette ville comme résidence précisément parce qu'il possédait des "honneurs" aux environs ? C'est ce que nous ne saurions décider.' This is a good question but it contains the assumptions that Frotar had become bishop of Poitiers and that either on this occasion or when he had been granted the abbacy of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers he had moved there from Bordeaux. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79, says: 'The claim that he was made bishop of Poitiers before going to Bourges is of no significance, since if that was the case, the appointment lasted no more than a few months.'

time Frotar was also granted the abbey of Saint-Saveur at Charroux (dep. Vienne),[1] and a little later - by January 874 at the latest - that of the abbey of Saint-Julien at Brioude in the Auvergne.[2] What is implicitly being assumed by this imagined 'flight' from Bordeaux in or about 868 is that when Frotar was nominated as abbot of Saint-Hilary and Charroux he had permanently and definitively moved there from Bordeaux, and, furthermore, that it was the threat or fact of Scandinavian 'incursions' near Bordeaux that had led to this flight. There is no evidence for either of these two hidden assumptions. As just noted, all the way down to 875-76 Frotar seems to have been going about his usual business as archbishop of Bordeaux and was being referred to as such. In addition, as Coupland says: 'It is significant that Hincmar and his fellow bishops never made any reference to Frotharius in the long and acrimonious debate over Actard, the exiled bishop of Nantes, between 868 and 872. If Frotharius, a metropolitan, had also been in exile at the time, would this not have been mentioned?'[3] Furthermore, there is no mention in any matters concerning Frotar that any Northmen were in or threatening Bordeaux or his archdiocese in general; such suggestions only crop up from July 876 onwards in connection with his very contested nomination as archbishop of Bourges.

Having received papal approval, Frotar 'was formally transferred from Bordeaux to succeed Wulfrad in the key metropolitan see of Bourges' on 13 July 876[4] at a synod held at Ponthion (dep. Marne) which sat between 20 June and 16 July where Frotar was present.[5] Frotar's nomination to Bourges had been pushed through by Charles despite the objections of Archbishop Hincmar, but then, possibly on 14 July, we finally find the very first mention of any pagans or Northmen. Hincmar wrote that after many cases had been aired in front of the

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[1] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 377, 528, 531 and nn. 20-23; É. Mabille, *Le royaume d'Aquitaine*, p. 43; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, nos. 374, 375.

[2] *Cartulaire de Brioude*, ed. H. Doniol (Clermont and Paris, 1863), pp. 147-49, 338-40. In a charter dated 10 March 874 at Compiègne, Frotar is referred to as archbishop of Bordeaux and abbot of Brioude; for which see Tessier, *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 373 and A. Bruel, 'Essai sur la chronologie du cartulaire de Brioude, précédé de quelques observations sur le texte de ce cartulaire d'après de nouveaux manuscrits', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 27 (1866), pp. 445-508, at p. 462. Later in the same year, on 16 November, in a charter issued at Attigny he is still called Archbishop of Bordeaux: *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 376. See also L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 378 and n. 18. For the background to Frotar's nomination as abbot of Brioude see F. Vivier, *La collégiale de Saint-Julien de Brioude (Haute-Loire) : Recherches sur les liens entre l'architecture ecclésiale, son agencement iconographique, et la liturgie d'une communauté canoniale au Moyen Âge*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand II, 2014), pp. 130-31. Available online at https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01466808. See also J. L. Nelson, 'The reign of Charles the Bald', p. 15.

[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79.

[4] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 244; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 404, dated 13 July 876.

[5] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 243. *AB* 876: ed. Grat, pp. 202 and 204; trans. Nelson, pp. 191-92 and 194. In the capitulary of Ponthion (*Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 279, pp. 348-53, at p. 349), which was probably written by Hincmar, Frotar was referred to as 'Frotarius archiepiscopus', whether this now means archbishop of Bourges or Bordeaux is unclear. He had first been nominated to the metropolitan see sometime earlier: see J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 192, n. 9.

papal legates: 'The statement of Frotar archbishop of Bordeaux was read out again (*iterum*):[1] he declared that he was unable to remain in his *civitas* because of the insecurity caused by the pagans and he sought permission to take possession of the metropolitan see of Bourges. The bishops did not unanimously agree to this request.'[2] There is no clear implication here that Frotar had already much earlier abandoned Bordeaux, or indeed that the Northmen were actually in Bordeaux or had yet attacked it let alone captured it; it was all about some perceived threat, whether imaginary, invented or real.[3] But Frotar stuck to his line and Charles had soon engaged the pope on his/their behalf.

Because Frotar's transfer to Bourges had not received unanimous approval from the bishops, he and Charles had to resort to obtaining further papal support for his appointment. Pope John VIII's legates had been at Ponthion and had heard Frotar's statement. Then at the end of October of the same year Pope John wrote three letters: to the clerics and laity of Berry,[4] to the bishops of the archdiocese of Bourges,[5] and to King Charles.[6] In each letter, whether his legates at Ponthion, bishops Leo and Peter, had believed Frotar's protestations or not, the pope attempted to justify Frotar's transfer to Bourges, the legality of which was highly dubious (*douteux*).[7] Using very similar vocabulary in each letter,[8] he repeats Frotar's claim that, to use Lot's rather hyperbolic and tendentious words: 'L'Aquitaine et sa métropole, Bordeaux, étaient absolument ruinées : le pays était une solitude et la population en partie réduite en captivité;'[9] although even

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[1] *AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 204; trans. Nelson, p. 194. J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 244. He must have maintained this before, probably earlier at Ponthion.

[2] *AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 204; trans. Nelson, p. 194. J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 194, n. 17, says: 'Hincmar means that he did not agree. Nevertheless, Frotar's transfer to Bourges went through.'

[3] Janet Nelson's translation that Frotar 'was unable to remain in his *civitas* because of the insecurity caused by the pagans' can be compared to the Latin 'quia non poterat consistere propter infestationem paganorum in ciuitate sua' (*AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 204). Although Hincmar's Latin, referring to Frotar's own words, might more suggest there were or had been Scandinavian harryings/devastations somewhere in the area, which had caused Bordeaux to become untenable for Frotar; nevertheless, Nelson's translation does capture the spirit if not necessarily the literal words of Hincmar.

[4] *MGH*, *Epistolae*, VII, no. 13, pp. 11-12, dated 28 October 876. At the beginning of the letter Pope John said that he had heard of Frotar's situation from his legates [to the Synod of Ponthion in June/July; see *AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 204; trans. Nelson, p. 193] Bishop Leo [of Sabina: *Grabinenis*] and Bishop Peter [of Fossombrone: *Fori Simpronii*], which shows that all his information regarding supposed incursions of the Northmen came from what Frotar had read out at Ponthion and is not therefore of any independent worth.

[5] *MGH*, *Epistolae*, VII, no. 14, pp. 12-13, dated 26 Oct 876. Again, Pope John starts his letter by saying he had been told of Frotar's situation by his legate [to Ponthion], Bishop Leo; he does not mention his legate Bishop Peter here.

[6] *MGH*, *Epistolae*, VII, no. 9, pp. 8-9, dated to October 876, or 28 October by Lot: 'Quocirca, licet nos multis kanonicis testimoniis provocati, petitionem vestre devotionis implere magnopere moliremur et solius maiestatis vestre testimonio super exterminio Burdegalensis provincie credere mimine cunctaremur ...'

[7] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 499-500, n. 3, at p. 500; the reason for its doubtfulness was the papal prohibition of the transfer of bishops or archbishops to other sees or even the accumulation of such sees.

[8] This includes his title as 'archbishop of Bordeaux', and his transfer to be archbishop of Bourges. It is noticeable that there is no mention in any of these letters of him having ever been bishop of Poitiers, nor indeed of being in Poitiers at all.

[9] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 499-500, n. 3, at p. 500.

Lot, who believed in a long-lasting presence of the 'Normands de la Gironde' after 864-65,[1] even finds all this an 'exagération de commande'.[2] But as Coupland in my view quite rightly says, 'the papal letters describing the archbishop's situation did not specifically refer to any recent raiding or destruction in the Bordeaux district, but rather to the widespread poverty and desolation which had resulted from a long period of hostile incursions'.[3] Pope John's letters do all seem to have been following the - Charles the Bald's - party line.

In Vogel's opinion: 'Behauptete Erzbischof Frotar von Bordeaux auf der Synode zu Ponthion im Juni [and July] 876, daß er wegen der normannischen Einfälle sich nicht auf seinem Sitze halten könne. Aber das war lediglich ein Vorwand; Frotar spekulierte auf den Erzstuhl von Bourges, indem er auf die infolge der Normannennot eingerissene milde Praxis rechnete, welche den Übergang auf andere Bischofsstühle zuließ',[4] 'At the synod at Ponthion in June 876 Archbishop Frotar of Bordeaux maintained that because of incursions of the Northmen he could no longer keep his seat. But this was merely an excuse/pretense; Frotar had in his sights the metropolitan seat of Bourges, by so doing he counted on merciful treatment/practice because the pressing danger of the Northmen would allow his transfer to another bishop's seat.'[5] He is referring here to the earlier case of the transfer of Bishop Actard of Nantes.[6] He correctly adds: 'Im übrigen besitzen wir keine einzige Nachricht von damaligen Plünderungen der Normannen südlich der Loire,'[7] 'Furthermore, we possess not a single report of any plunderings by the Northmen south of the Loire at that time.'[8] Or as Coupland similarly says: 'There is in fact no evidence of any Scandinavian presence in the south of Aquitaine in 876, and it appears that Frotharius's move to Poitiers, where he held at least one important benefice, may well have been motivated by the desire to take over the vacant see of Bourges.'[9]

Finally, in 878 at a synod of bishops held at Troyes, Pope John VIII ordered that there be read out the canons of the Council of Sardica (modern Sofia) and Pope Leo's decrees 'concerning bishops who change their sees', and also the 'African canons to the effect that such transfers of bishops from one see to another should not be made [...]. This latter point referred to the case of Bishop Frotar of Bordeaux who was said to have jumped from Bordeaux to

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 499.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 499-500, n. 3, at p. 500.
[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79.
[4] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 250.
[5] My translation.
[6] For who see P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes'.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] My translation.
[9] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79.

Poitiers and thence to the see of Bourges', 'pro Frotario Burdegalensi episcopo, qui de Burdegale Pictauis indeque Biturigensem ciuitatem exilisse[1] dicebatur'.[2]

It has been necessary to examine the case of Frotar in some detail because it is his claim that his see had become untenable because of the Northmen's presence that is one of the principal planks of the oft-stated view that throughout the second half of the 860s, and even into the 870s, Northmen were still active in or around Bordeaux.

What might we reasonably conclude from our rather sceptical examination of the case of Archbishop Frotar?

Firstly, there is nothing in the case of Frotar to suggest that his being granted honours in Poitou in the late 860s had anything to do with him having to 'flee' Northmen in or near Bordeaux.[3] Secondly, if he really was appointed bishop of Poitiers in *c*.875, which is doubtful, neither can this be put down to such incursions. In fact, Frotar probably only left Bordeaux in the spring of 876[4] and stayed for a few months in Poitiers (whether or not as bishop) before being appointed archbishop of Bourges.[5] Thirdly, are we to imagine that 'Frotharius's flight', if that is what it was, indicates 'an upsurge in Scandinavian activity in southern Aquitaine towards the beginning of 876?'[6] Or even slightly before? Here again probably not. It could be that the attack on Bourges in Berry in 867[7] which originated from the Loire had worried the inhabitants of more southerly Aquitaine and even Bordeaux but there is no indication that the Northmen responsible headed further south and, in any case, this was a decade earlier.[8]

The only marginal possibility for the idea of 'an upsurge in Scandinavian activity in southern Aquitaine towards the beginning of 876' is that after the siege of Angers in 873 some of the Northmen involved had then made an incursion into south-western Aquitaine near to Bordeaux.[9]

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[1] Janet Nelson's translation as 'jumped' seems fair.
[2] *AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 227; trans. Nelson, p. 210.
[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 499 and n. 2, was not quite right to say that after 865 the Northmen 'de la Gironde continuèrent, soit à occupier Bordeaux, soit à rendre le séjour intenable par des incursions fréquentes ; si bien que, peu de temps après, l'archevêque Frotier abandonnait sa métropole […] et cherchait un refuge à Poitiers', and then, after mentioning him being granted the abbacy of Saint-Hilary at Poitiers 'au début de 868', he adds that: 'Cette donation ne peut s'expliquer que par la situation désespérée que les Normands faisaient au métropolitain de Bordeaux, et elle se place en janvier or février 868.'
[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 63: 'The flight of Frotharius [...] probably did not take place until 876'; and at p. 79: 'There are [...] several reasons for locating Frotharius's exile [...] in 876'.
[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79: 'The claim that he was made bishop of Poitiers before going to Bourges is of no significance, since it that was the case, the appointment lasted no more than a few months.'
[6] *Ibid*., p. 79.
[7] For this attack on Bourges and its dating see Chapter 9.
[8] Although there is some slight though undated evidence that there may have been some Scandinavian activity in the 870s in Lower Poitou, an issue that will be discussed in Chapters 9 and 10.
[9] This siege of Angers in 873 and what followed will be discussed more in Chapter 9.

This is not completely inconceivable but any suggestion that this had been the case would be mere conjecture and there is no evidence for it.

Vulgrin's fights against the Northmen and the building of *castra*

It is quite crucial for our examination of the question of whether Northmen were operating in Aquitaine south of the Loire in the years after 865 to now consider some of Ademar of Chabannes's stories. This is not because Ademar is in any way a reliable authority on the ninth century, except for when he borrows from earlier sources, but rather because of the way his testimony has been accepted at face value by many more recent historians to support the idea of a long-lasting Scandinavian presence in western Aquitaine, starting with Ferdinand Lot. These stories tell us, amongst other things, that after the death of Turpio in late 863 and Emeno and Landric in 866, a count Vulgrin had taken over the counties of Angoulême and Périgueux, and that Vulgrin had fought many times against the Northmen, plus that two *castra* were built as protection against them. The discussion in this section may seem to take us a long way from our subject - vikings in Aquitaine - but it really does not. Both the idea of Count Vulgrin having fought the Northmen on several occasions and the suggestion of the building of small *castra* against them are critical to any understanding of what went on (or not) with the Northmen in Aquitaine in the years after 865.

It will be remembered that Turpio - supposedly the count of Angoulême - had been killed fighting the chieftain Maur on 4 October 863. For 866 the local *Annals of Angoulême* report: 'DCCCLXVI. Emeno cum Landrico congreditur, XVIII Kal. Jul; et occiso Landrico, Emeno saucis ad castrum regreditur suum, et, post dies octo, debitum naturae persolvit, X Kal. Jul.'[1] The later Limousin version called the *Chronicle of Aquitaine*[2] borrows this story but adds the information that Emeno was Turpio's brother and was himself count of Angoulême, whilst Landric was count of Saintes, plus that the *castrum* to which the injured Emeno was brought was called Rancogne[3] (*Runconia*).[4]

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[1] *AAng* 866, p. 486.

[2] Ademar had at least some part in writing the *Chronicon Aquitanicum*, see J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', p. 49 and n. 54.

[3] La Rochefoucauld, dep. Charente, arr. Angoulême. J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', p. 50, points out 'the reference to Rancogne - later on an important castle - is suspicious'; cf. also P. Bourgain, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, p. 264, n. III. 19, 24. This seems another place where the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* bears the mark of Ademar.

[4] *ChrAquit*, p. 253: 'DCCLVI. Emeno, Turpionis frater, Engolismae comes, cum Landrico Sanctonico comite confligit, et, occiso Landrico, saucis in castra Runconia reducitur, et die octava motitur.' This fight is also reported by the *Annales Floriacenses* and was copied by the tenth-century Continuator of Ado of Vienne *s.a.* 866: 'Et duo principes Aquitanici, Landricus et Imino, inter se dimcantes semet interimunt': *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 2, pp. 254 and

Ademar took all of this into his *Chronicon*, modifying it slightly.[1] Following a report of Turpio's death[2] we then hear from Ademar that: 'Emeno, frater ejus, Engolisme comes exitit, et ipse post biennium cum Landrico, Sanctonicensi comite, confligens, interempto Landrico, in castra Runconin reductitur sautis et octava die moritur; sepultus juxta bascilicam beati Eparchii; et reliquid filium parvum Ademarum nomine.'[3]

Although they were translating the 'C' text of Ademar's *Chronicle*, Yves Chauvin and Georges Pon's French translation is very useful, although I have redacted the addition the C text made: 'Emenon son frère [...] devint alors comte de Angoulême, et deux ans plus tard, affrontant Landri, comte de Saintes, et, l'ayant tué, blessé, il est ramené au château de Rancogne où il meurt le huitième jour : on l'ensevelit près de la basilique Saint-Cybard.'[4] We then hear of Charles (the Bald), his relative, sending a certain Vulgrin to replace Emeno, which supposedly happened two years later, hence in 866: 'Et Carolus, hoc audito, Vulgrimnum propinquum, fratem Aldoini, abbatis ex monasterio Sancti Dionisi, direxit, et prefecit eum Engolismo et Petragorice, et Olibam statuit in episcopate Engolismensi.'[5] Again with one necessary redaction this translates as: 'L'apprenant, Charles envoya [...] Vulgrin, son parent, frère d'Hilduin, abbé, venu du monastère de Saint-Denis, et le fit comte d'Angoulême ainsi de Périgueux; il établit Oliba sur l'évêché d'Angoulême.'[6] Unfortunately I cannot explore in any detail the question of who Vulgrin was or where he had come from. It is certainly not sure that he was a brother of an abbot Hilduin of Saint-Denis, even if this was 'Hilduin II' as Lot argued;[7] other origins are quite possible and scholars have not yet come to any consensus.[8]

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324. The 'short' *Annals of Angoulême* (*MGH*, *Scriptores*, 4, p. 5) just say: 'Emeo comes Engolismensis interfectus est X Kal. Jul.'

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, pp. 136-37.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

[4] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 218. The addition of the C text which I have removed says that Emeno had formerly been count of Poitiers (*dudum comes Pictavinus*).

[5] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 137.

[6] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 218. In the 'C' text (for which see see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 122-23; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III. 19). Ademar or his twelfth-century 'interpolator' then goes on to tell a fabulous concocted story of how Vulgrin was a very old man when he arrived, having previously been used as an envoy of Carloman (d. 771) and his brother Charlemagne (d. 814) to carry out justice in the the towns of Aquitaine, and much other unlikely information; for which see J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', pp. 48-49 and n. 53.

[7] F. Lot, 'De quelques personnages du IXe siècle qui porté le nom Hilduin', *Le Moyen Age*, 16 (1903), pp. 249-82, at pp. 280-82.

[8] See in the first instance F. Lot, *ibid.*; *idem*, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve. Année 866', *Le Moyen Age*, 15 (1902), pp. 394-438, at p. 433; J. Depoin, *Les comtes héréditaires d'Angoulême de Vulgrin Ier à Audoin II (869-1032)*, extracted from the *Bulletin de la Société Archeologique et Historique de la Charente,* 1904 (Angoulême, 1905), pp. 2-3; L. Levillain, 'Les Nibelungen historiques et leurs alliances de famille', II, *Annales du Midi*, 50 (1938), pp. 5-66, at pp. 6-11; *idem*, 'Adémar de Chabannes généalogiste', *Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 3. 10 (1934-35), pp. 237-63; A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 61 and n. 6; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne,* pp. 352-53, 424.

That Vulgrin was appointed to both Angoulême and Périgueux in *c*.866 has been accepted as a fact by almost all historians. We know from an Angoulême charter that Vulgrin was already count of Angoulême (*Equalisinorum comiti Vulgrimo*) by January 868,[1] and we can thus assume that he had become so somewhat before this, possibly indeed from the end of 866 or early 867 after the death Emeno (and Landric) in June 866 and even after the battle at Brissarthe in September 866 where Robert the Strong was killed and count Ramnulf of Poitiers died of his wounds three days later.[2] As André Debord put it: 'La nomination de Vulgrin s'inscrit […] très normalement dans la réorganisation de l'Aquitaine, jalonnée entres autres par la désignation de Louis le Begue comme roi [of Aquitaine] en mars 867 : la constitution du grand commandement se situe logiquement à la fin de 866 ou au début de 867.'[3]

But in order to bolster this date of about 866 Léon Levillain, who is followed in this by others, needs to alter some other supposed information given in Ademar's *Chronicon*, but this time found only in the C text. This text says:

> Quant à Vulgrin, qui revendiquait Agen du fait de la sœur de Guillaume de Toulouse, dont il avait eu les deux fils susdits, il gouverna très vigoureusement Agen pendant vingt-six ans, Angoulême et Périgueux pendant quinze ans, et mourut la seizième année après la mort de Lothaire.[4]

We know that Vulgrin died in 886 and thus if he had governed both Angoulême and Périgueux for fifteen years this would date his appointment to both counties to about 871. Levillain maintained there was a transcription error in Ademar's C text, and that thus 'XV' years should be read as 'XX' years. Hence counting back twenty years from 886 we get to 866.[5] This enables him to restate his case: 'Il [Vulgrin] avait donc gouverné ses deux comtés vingt ans.'[6] It is all very arbitrary and circular and is based on Levillain's belief that Ademar was an excellent genealogist, on which subject he even wrote a long though not entirely convincing article.[7] Of course Ademar would have known from the *Annals of Angoulême* that Vulgrin had died in 886;[8]

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[1] *Cartulaire de l'église d'Angoulême*, ed. J. Nanglard (Angoulême, 1900), no. XXXVIII. This charter is discussed in more detail later.
[2] The battle at Brissarthe in September 866 is examined in Chapter 9.
[3] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 62.
[4] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 21, p. 221; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 130. *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III, 21. Lothar I actually died in 855 and thus the sixteenth year after his death would thus take us to about 871 for Vulgrin's death, which really occurred in 886.
[5] L. Levillain, 'Les Nibelungen historiques', II, p. 8.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] L. Levillain, 'Adémar de Chabannes généalogiste'.
[8] *AAng* 886, p. 486: 'Vulcrim comes obiit.'

but it is only the later *Chronicle of Aquitaine*, which certainly does rather display something of Ademar's influence or hand, which says that Vulgrin had been count of Périgueux at his death in 886: 'Vulgrimnus Petragoricus comes obiit.'[1]

It may be highly doubted that Vulgrin had also taken over the county of Périgord in late 866 or even early 867. The whole idea seems to be based on the rather erroneous belief that Emeno of Angoulême, who was succeeded by Vulgrin, was the same man as Immo of Périgueux, which as discussed in the previous chapter is most unlikely to have been the case.

After the death of Immo the count of Périgueux (in what year we do not know)[2] who had then become the périgordian count? In my opinion there can be little doubt that his son Arnald took over his father's county. Arnald probably did not die in about 864 as is often claimed. He most likely survived for some years perhaps even, at least according to Renée Mussot-Goulard, until about 871.[3] Lot quite rightly wrote: 'Il ne ressort pas de ce texte [of the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*] qu'Arnaud fut mort en 864 […], mais qu'il était décédé lors de la rédaction de la *Translatio*. Il fut "inopinata morte praeventus" à une date et dans des circonstances inconnues.'[4] Nevertheless, that Vulgrin did become count of Périgueux at some point before his death in 886 is at least possible because in his C text Ademar says that on his death Vulgrin left Angoulême to his son *Alduinus* (Audoin in French) and Périgueux and Agen to his son *Willelmus* (William),[5] although we should be very wary of using Ademar to support Ademar.

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[1] *ChrAquit* 886, p. 253.

[2] It should be noted that the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* says nothing about whether Immo of Périgueux was or was not dead in 864 when his son Arnald gained the 'duchy' of Gascony after the death of his maternal uncle Sancho Sanchez. Immo might have died before or after this.

[3] Although this date suggested by R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 102 and n. 81, is itself based on a belief in Ademar's statement in the C text that Vulgrin had governed Périgueux for fifteen years when he died in 886, therefore it too should be doubted.

[4] F. Lot, *Hugues Capet*, pp. 377-78, n. 2,

[5] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 19, p. 219; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 123. With regard to *Alduinus*, taking their lead from Ademar historians seem to have invariably accepted that he did take possession of Angoulême following his father Vulgrin's death in 886. See for example J. Depoin, *Les comtes héréditaires d'Angoulême de Vulgrin Ier à Audoin II (869-1032)*, pp. 8-9; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, p. 264, n. III, 19, 35; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 218, n. 174; R. C. Watson, *The Counts of Angouleme from the 9th to the mid 13th century: with a catalogue of comital documents from 882/3 to 1246*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of East Anglia, 1979), p. 29. But this is just an assumption based on a belief in Ademar. In fact, the only evidence we have regarding *Alduinus* except from Ademar is from the *Annals of Angoulême* which report *s.a.* 916: 'Ilduinus comes 6. Kal. April. Obiit': *AAng* 916, p. 486, and it should be noted that *Ilduinus/Alduinus* is not here said to have been count of Angoulême although he very probably was. But doubtless based on this report in the *Annals of Angoulême* that *Ilduinus/Alduinus* had died in 916, plus his own assumption that *Alduinus* had succeeded his father Vulgrin in 886, Ademar says in all major manuscripts of his *Chronicon* (H, A, and C) that *Alduinus* lived (not ruled) for thirty years after this and during this time he had restored the walls of Angoulême: see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, book 3, chap. 23, p. 138; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 23, p. 226. With regard to Vulgrin's supposed son William, following Ademar A. Debord (*La société laïque*, p. 99) identifies him being count of Périgueux and Agen; he is followed in this by Pascale Bourgain *et al.* (*Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, p. 265, n. II, 19, 38) who say: 'Guillaume Ier, comte de Périgueux et d'Agen, ne semble pas avoir, sauf exceptionellement, gouverné le comté d'Angoulême avec son frère', referencing only André Debord (as referenced

What can we say about Vulgrin perhaps also being appointed as count of Agen? This too is doubtful. The only 'evidence' that Vulgrin had also become count of Agen at some point comes once again from Ademar's C text. This first says, after mentioning his appointment to Angoulême and Périgueux, but without any information as to when: 'Il tenait aussi la ville d'Agen, qu'il revendiqua en faisant valoir les droits de la sœur de Guillaume qu'il avait reçue en mariage,' to which he adds that 'il tint le gouvernement de ces trois cités pendant dix-sept ans'.[1] Here we find another time period, seventeen years, during which Vulgrin supposedly governed the 'three cities' (Angoulême, Périgueux and Agen), which if it were true would indicate he had taken over all three counties in about 869. But then a little later in the text (as quoted more fully above) Ademar adds, when talking about later events and Vulgrin's death, that: 'Quant à Vulgrin, qui revendiquait Agen du fait de la sœur de Guillaume de Toulouse [...] il governa très rigoureusement Agen pendant vingt-six ans.'[2] But that would take us back to 860 supposedly before Vulgrin had even arrived in the region. Thus Levillain, realising the supposed impossibility of this, has there being a 'double-mistranscription' in Ademar's C text, which he argues means that 'XXVI' years should be read as 'XVIII' years. Thus, he has the 'reunion' with Agen taking place in 869,[3] which of course fits with the C text's earlier statement that he had governed Agen (and also Angoulême and Périgueux which Levillain does not point out here) for seventeen years. This is all rather forced. Levillain's approach to Ademar of Chabannes is one clear example of what John Gillingham says: 'What they [historians] have done is reject Ademar's testimony when it can be proved to be mistaken [...] and accept it when it is not obviously wrong; in other words they treat him as a generally reliable compiler who occasionally makes mistakes.'[4] Levillain undoubtedly does this, but he also had to resort to conjuring up multiple 'mistranscriptions' of the numbers of years given in Ademar's texts to try to force them to agree with his already preconceived schema and chronology. As Sébastien

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above); see also *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 23, p. 218, n. 175, p. 227, n. 227. For the future of William's two children, Bernard and Sancie, see Ademar's *Chronicon* book 3, chap. 23 (for MSS H, A and C cf. J. Lair, *Études critiques*, book 3, chap. 23, p. 140). Supposedly, Bernard assassinated the two sons of Ramnulf viscount of Marcillac, Lambert and Arnulf, because these two had tried to kill his sister Sancie. I will not examine these late ninth-century and early tenth-century matters more here; I would just say that the names William, Bernard and Sancie came into Vulgrin's family because Vulgrin had married the sister of 'William of Toulouse' (who may have been called Roselinde). This 'William of Toulouse' of Ademar means the son of Bernard of Septimania (d. 844) (himself the son of 'Saint' William of Gellone, count of Toulouse d. 812-815) and his wife Dhuoda, who was herself the sister of the Gascon count Sancho Sanchez (hence the name Sancie/*Sanciae*/*Santie*). See also Chapters 3, 6 and 8, and the notes immediately below.

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 218.

[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 21, p. 221; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 137; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 130.

[3] L. Levillain, 'Les Nibelungen historiques', II (1938), p. 10.

[4] J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', pp. 45-46.

Fray quite rightly says in regard to Levillain's dating corrections, 'Ses arguments ne nous paraissent guère convaincants. Nous le suivrons d'autant moins qu'il nous semble périlleux de vouloir toujours rectifier les sources lorsque leurs affirmations ne cadrent pas avec ce que l'on veut démontrer'.[1]

André Debord followed Levillain. He found Levillain's two 'corrections graphiques' to Ademar's numbers - for Angoulême/Périgueux and for Agen - 'très vraisemblables'. He thus states that 'Vulgrin aurait ainsi gouverné pendant vingt ans Angoumois et Périgord (donc à partir de 866) et dix-sept ans à Agen', hence from 869.[2]

Finally, regarding the extent of Vulgrin's 'commandement', Jacques Flach once suggested that he had also been granted the countship of the Saintonge.[3] In this he was followed by Auzias[4] and Dhondt.[5] The same idea was also supported by André Debord who wrote that, 'Après 866, il n'y a plus de comte en Saintonge : la région a sans doute été confiée à Vulgrin en 867, mais plutôt comme un secteur à reconquérir',[6] and elsewhere, 'On serait [...] tenté d'admettre que le Saintonge a fait partie des comtés confiés à Vulgrin en 866-867'.[7] I am tempted to accept this as well although without the categorical 'sans doute'. But I cannot agree with Debord that the Saintonge was 'plutôt comme un secteur à reconquérir'.[8] This is purely based on Debord's completely unfounded assumption that 'la Saintonge occidentale et girondine' was 'en partie occupé par les Vikings après 865', and, indeed, that it appears that the area was 'totalement désorganisée jusqu'à sa progressive reconquête';[9] that is its 'reconquest' from the Northmen, which Debord places quite unbelievably as only being fully achieved in the early tenth century.[10]

Léonce Auzias, who was completely sure that Vulgrin had been granted Agen at about this time as well as the counties of Angoulême and Périgueux,[11] says 'on n'hésiterait pas à voir en lui le seigneur le plus puissant de l'Aquitaine occidentale. Sans doute Charles le Chauve se

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[1] S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque*, p. 1138, n. 4853.
[2] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 62.
[3] J. Flach, *Les origines de l'ancienne France : X^e^ et XIe siècles*, vol. IV, *Les nationalités régionales : Leurs rapports avec la Couronne de France* (Paris, 1917), p. 493. Flach also conjectured that Vulgrin had become count of Poitou, but this idea must be rejected.
[4] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne,* p. 353: 'Il était sûr que Vulgrin ait été nanti aussi du comté d'Agen et qu'il ait reçu celui de Saintes'; but he adds in a note regarding Saintes (p. 353, n. 65): 'C'est une conjecture de J. Flach […] fondée sur ce fait que nous ne connaissons pas de comte particulier de Saintes après 866 et que nous retrouvons plus tard ce comté uni à l'Angoumois.'
[5] J. Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés*, pp. 203, 214.
[6] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 56.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 64.
[8] *Ibid*., p. 56.
[9] *Ibid*.
[10] *Ibid*., p. 57.
[11] L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne,* p. 352.

proposait-il de réaliser en sa personne l'unité de commandement contre les Normands de la Charente et de la Garonne';[1] to which he shortly thereafter adds:

> Ainsi Charles le Chauve fidèle à sa politique opportuniste, tandis qu'il disloquait les grandes marches méridionales, concentrait à l'Ouest les comtés dans les mêmes mains, et qui sait si la faveur de Vulgrin, son parent et son homme de confiance, ne s'explique pas autant par le désir du roi de faire surveiller par lui les puissants marquis de Toulouse, de Narbonne et de Barcelone que par son désir d'opposer aux Normands du Sud-Ouest un personnage pourvu de moyens aussi puissants que l'était Robert le Fort pour résister aux pirates du Nord-Ouest?[2]

This may or may not have been so. But regarding the Northmen involved, who are always our primary concern, Auzias, partially following Lot as he often did, believed that after 864-865 there were still three separate and unidentified groups of Northmen operating on the Garonne, the Charente and the Loire.[3] This was most certainly not the case. Nevertheless, that Charles had appointed Vulgrin to some or all of these counties must have been in part at least in the expectation or hope that he would confront any future Scandinavian raids in southern Aquitaine. This is what Ademar actually said he did. In chapter 20 of book 3 of his *Chronicon* in the middle of discussing events in later years Ademar mentions Vulgrin's death 'on the 5th of the nones of May' (886), and his being buried (like Emeno) near to the church of Saint-Cybard.[4] Then, it seems as a type of late memorial for the supposed progenitor of the counts of Angoulême who were so important for him, Ademar adds:

> Vulgrimnus autem multis preliis laboraverat frequenter cum Normannis, et hac de causa aedificaverat castrum Martiliacum, et Mastacium, ut esset munimen contra paganos. Miseratque in Martiliaco Robertum, legis doctum, et cum eo Rannulfum, quem fecit vicecomitem.[5]

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[1] *Ibid*.
[2] *Ibid*. Elsewhere (*ibid*., p. 353, n. 67) regarding Count Arnald's successor in Gascony, Auzias asks: 'Quel fut son successeur en Gascogne? Nous l'ignorons. Nul indice ne nous permet de croire que ce fut Vulgrin auquel cependant on pourrait songer.'
[3] *Ibid*, p. 340.
[4] MS 'A', *Adémar de Chabannes Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 138; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 125. In manucript 'C' this is included at the end of chapter 19, see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 123; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 219.
[5] *Adémar de Chabannes Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 138; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 125.

Which, with the usual caveat that the C text differs very marginally here from the A text just quoted, can be rendered as:

> [Vulgrin] se dépensa dans de nombreux combats contre les Normands et, pour cette raison, il fit construire les châteaux de Marcillac et de Matha pour en faire un retranchement contre les païens ; il envoya Robert, savant homme de loi, à Marcillac, et avec lui Ramnoul [Ramnulf] qui était venu avec lui et dont il fit un vicomte.[1]

Upon these few lines concerning events in earlier times from the notoriously unreliable Ademar whole elaborate theories have been constructed regarding the presence of Northmen in western Aquitaine in the late 860s and even into the 880s.

Vulgrin only died in 886, thus when these purported 'numerous combats' against the Northmen really took place cannot be ascertained with any certainty. But if we accept a date for his arrival at Angoulême at least of 866-67 then it must be presumed that Ademar was saying such combats took place after that. But the fact is that neither Hincmar nor the local *Annals of Angoulême*, nor even the *Chronicle of Aquitaine*, upon both of which Ademar was very dependent - although he may have partially reworked the latter - say anything about such combats by Vulgrin is very telling, although this in itself cannot completely exclude that he had done so.

Walther Vogel suggested that these 'supposed' fights with the Northmen after 865 could have 'taken place in southerly Poitou and in the Angoumois, although nothing more has been transmitted about them' ('in das südliche Poitou und das Angoumois stattgefunden, doch ist darüber weiter nichts überliefert'), to which he adds that 'these attacks probably originated from the Loire Northmen' ('Wahrscheinlich gingen diese Angriffe von den Loire-Normannen aus').[2] This idea has something to commend it because as will be shown later in the present work there were likely some Scandinavian attacks south of the Loire, even probably into Lower Poitou, after 865, although none of these as far as can be seen reached the Angoumois and their dating is uncertain.

Next, that Vulgrin built these two *castra* at Marcillac in the Angoumois and Matha in the Saintonge sometime between 866 and 886 has been accepted as an established fact by most French historians and following them by some scholars elsewhere.

This is not the place to explore Ademar's general reliability regarding events in the ninth century and even much of the tenth century. I would just say here that I completely agree with

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 218.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 211, n. 1, my translations.

John Gillingham's summation: 'Ademar is such an ingeniously unreliable historian that the onus of proof rests fair and square on the shoulders of those who wish to believe anything he says.'[1]

Nevertheless, it might be worthwhile spending a little time examining this particular story in more detail. Gillingham has shown how Ademar operated when crafting his stories about the ninth and tenth centuries. Essentially his method was to take what he found in his available sources and then make 'deductions' on the basis of the same names and places mentioned elsewhere in these sources or others. Gillingham gives many fine examples of this method at work. I think that Ademar was engaging in the same method here.

The sources Ademar usually used for much of book 3 of his *Chronicle* were in the first instance the *Annals of Angoulême* (in both the short and long versions); followed by their Limousin derivative the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* which had certainly passed through Ademar's own hands and was quite possibly reworked by him;[2] plus charters from Angoulême and Limoges, which were certainly known and used by him, plus, there can be little doubt, the Berry *Miracles of Saint Genulf*;[3] perhaps also Ermentarius's *Life and Miracles of Saint Philibert*; and just perhaps the Fleury *Annales Floriacenses* or/and later tenth-century *Continuator of Ado of Vienne* which directly borrowed from it.[4]

First, regarding Vulgrin, Ademar would have been able to read an Angoulême charter dated 22 January 868 which says, as summarised by Nanglard, 'Teutbert, en présence de plusieurs ecclésiastiques et laïques réunis dans l'église de La Rochebaucourt, remet à l'évêque d'Angoulême un mas, situé sur la Nizonne et donné autrefois à sa cathédrale. Il avoue en avoir joui injustement avec son frère Ursius, aujourd'hui défunt (22 janvier 868).'[5] The bishop present was Elias the Scot (i.e. the Irishman) of Angoulême and the charter was confirmed the next day by *Equalisinorum comiti Vulgrimo*. This is the first attested proof of Vulgrin's position as the count of Angoulême. Similarly, he could have seen another Angoulême charter dated June 879 which was a confirmation of a donation of land to the church of Saint-Peter at Angoulême. The first witness to this confirmation was of *Ramnulfo, vicecomiti*.[6]

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[1] J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', p. 46.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 49: 'Almost certainly we can identify the Chronicon Aquitanicum as one such piece of the preparatory work which went into the writing of his own chronicle.'
[3] Ademar's use of the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* is discussed more in Chapter 13.
[4] Cf. *Annales Floriacenses*, A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire et les miracles de saint Benoît* (Paris, 1965), Appendice II, pp. 217-20; *MGH, Scriptores*, 2, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hanover, 1829), pp. 254-55; *Continuator of Ado of Vienne*, *MGH, Scriptores*, 2, pp. 323-34.
[5] *Cartulaire de l'église d'Angoulême*, ed. J. Nanglard, no. XXXVIII.
[6] *Ibid*., no. XL: 'Data vel facta cessione ista in mense junii, anno primo post obitum Ludovici.'

Furthermore, one of the notes written in Ademar's own hand concerns a lawsuit in which was heard 'cum resedisset Vulgrimnus comes cum rainburgis in mallo publico'.[1] At the end of this note Ademar wrote: 'Signum Ramnulf vicecomiti. XII testes firmaverunt cartam, Actum anno II regnante Carlomanno.'[2] John Gillingham observes: 'Count Vulgrin died in 886 and it is clear that Ademar had in his hands a document drawn up in the reign of Carloman (who died in 884).'[3] That the second year of Carloman is indicated suggests a date of about 880-81. Gillingham then goes on to show what Ademar made of this.[4]

There are two further mentions of a viscount Ramnulf in Ademar's notes, both of which he had clearly taken from Angoulême charters/documents. The first was based on a charter in the reign of Carloman, hence before 884; it reads: 'Oliba episcopus Egolismensis fuit temporare Arnulfi regis filii Odonis. Tunc errant canonici in loco Sancti Eparchii, regnant Carlomano ; curtem Narciaco, cum capella Sancti Severini, tres mansos et IIII apsos, Ramnulfus et Senegundis uxor ejus. S. Vulgrimnus comes qui fuit tempore Olibae episcopi. S. Bernardo comitis. S. Willelmo Follo.'[5] The second is dated to 888 and reads: 'Ecclesiam Narciaco dedit Ramnulf vicecomes et Senegundis, uxor ejus, et villam Conciso. Anno incarnationis Domini DCCCLXXXVIII.'[6] This has clearly been taken from a charter of the abbey of Saint-Cybard.[7]

It is from sources such as these that Ademar knew about Ramnulf. He then, I would suggest, assumed that Ramnulf must have become viscount before 879, which is likely true, but he also deduced that it must have been Vulgrin, who as shown is named as count in some of these documents, who must have nominated him as viscount and installed him at Marcillac.

Let us turn to where Ademar got his information about Marcillac. The *vicaria* of Marcillac is named in at least two undated Angoulême charters relating the donation of lands to the church of Saint-Peter at Angoulême, but it is likely that these were written after Ademar's death.[8] Ademar's interest in Marcillac and particularly its *castrum* probably derived from events in his

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[1] *Cum rainburgis*: The 'rachimbourgs' were the assessors of the count in Frankish tribunals.
[2] L. Delisle, 'Notices sur les manuscrits originaux d'Adémar de Chabannes', in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques*, 35. 1 (Paris, 1896), p. 317.
[3] J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', p. 48.
[4] *Ibid*., pp. 48-49.
[5] L. Delisle, 'Notices', p. 317.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 315.
[7] See *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Cybard*, ed. P. Lefranq (Angoulême, 1931), no. 228, p. 206.
[8] *Cartulaire de l'église d'Angoulême*, no. CVII: 'Vicaria Martiliacensi, quod videlicet alodium filii Rotberti, prepositi Engolismae'; Nanglard's summary: 'Aimeric donne aux chanoines de Saint-Pierre d'Angoulême son aleu d'Auge, situé dans la viguerie de Marcillac, que les fils de Robert, prévôt d'Angoulême, tiennent de lui à fief. Date inconnue'; no. XLVII: 'In pago Engolismensium, in vicaria Martiliaco'; Nanglard's summary: 'L'archidiacre Arnauld donne à Saint-Pierre d'Angoulême la partie de ses domaines de Patreville située dans la vicairie de Marcillac en Angoumois. Date inconnue.'

own day, in fact from 1024.[1] Ademar himself tells a story in book 3, chapter 60 of his *Chronicon* about Marcillac.[2] There had been a running dispute between three brothers for the possession of the 'castle' (*castrum*) of Ruffec (dep. Charente). The brothers William, who was viscount of Marcillac (*Guillelmus vicecomes Martiliencis*), and Odolric were opposed to their third brother Alduin. The count of Angoulême William[3] intervened and had them make peace. But it seems they were not sincere when they made their oaths because by some ruse William and Odolric induced Alduin to come to meet them (it seems at Marcillac). After they had taken their meal, Alduin had retired to his bed 'in their house'. But while he was still in bed his brothers seized him and cut out his tongue and gouged out his eyes. When Count William had returned from a trip to Rome, he decided to punish the two brothers for such impiety. He asked Duke William[4] to join him, and together they besieged Marcillac, destroyed it and set fire to the castle. This 'château de Marcillac' was, as Chauvin and Pon express it, 'une tour de bois sur motte',[5] or as André Debord says: 'Lorsqu'Adémar de Chabannes parle de *castrum*, il peut évoquer toutes sortes de fortifications rurales ; mais pour la période qui lui est contemporaine, il s'agit le plus souvent d'un donjon en bois sur une motte.'[6]

Viscount William and his brother were spared their lives and bodies[7] but were deprived of all their *honores* and had to concede Ruffec to the blinded Alduin. A few years later Alduin's son of the same name rebuilt Marcillac and kept it for himself. This is precisely the type of fight between local magnates which was the reason why many small *castra* and towers had sprung up throughout southern France. But it is clear that Ademar would have had no idea when and by whom the wooden *castrum* of Marcillac had first been built. According to Ademar's own garbled and unreliable genealogy,[8] William count of Angoulême was the grandson of William 'Taillefer', himself a grandson of Vulgrin;[9] Ademar probably saw no reason *not* to deduce that William, the early eleventh-century viscount of Marcillac, was also a descendant of the only

[1] A. Debord, '*Castrum* et *Castellum* chez Adémar de Chabannes', in *Archéologie médiévale*, vol. 9 (1979), pp. 97-113, at p. 104.
[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 60, pp. 185-86; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, pp. 279-80.
[3] Usually called William IV (as the fourth William in his family), or sometimes William II (as the second with the sobriquet Taillefer); he became count of Angoulême in 987 and died in 1028.
[4] William V 'the Great' (969-1030) was 'duke' of Aquitaine and count of Poitiers until his death in 1030. The two Williams had gone to Rome together.
[5] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 280, n. 545.
[6] A. Debord, '*Castrum* et *Castellum*', p. 108.
[7] Meaning they were not mutilated.
[8] I cannot explore such genealogical matters further here; but Ademar was not such a good genealogist as Léon Levillain once tried to show him to have been: see L. Levillain, 'Adémar de Chabannes, généalogiste'.
[9] L. Bourgeois, *Andone. Archéologie d'un chateau des comtes d'Angoulême autour de l'an mil* (Angoulême, 2011), p. 3: 'Vulgrin. Ce personnage constitue la souche de la dynastie des Taillefer, comtes d'Angoulême, qui se perpétua jusqu'en 1202.'

early viscount he knew of from charters he had read, Ramnulf, who Ademar says had three sons with the names of Arnulf, Lambert and Odelric,[1] and that this Ramnulf was the original occupier of a *castrum* at Marcillac, built supposedly by Vulgrin. In fact, there is no evidence that there was a wooden *castrum* or *tour* at Marcillac in the ninth century; it is probably just Ademar's deduction or imagination.

What about the *legis doctum* ('savant homme de loi') Robert, who Ademar says had gone with Ramnulf to Marcillac, perhaps seeming to suggest that he was the young Ramnulf's guardian (*bajulus*). Who was he? It is worth stressing that Ademar had no 'now lost' written source or sources to rely on for events in the mid-ninth century;[2] he was totally reliant on the sources he had to hand and possibly some oral tradition of his elders at Angoulême,[3] and of course his own deductions. In another of Ademar's own handwritten notes we find a Robert and a Ramnulf together regarding a grant *in vicaria Petriacense* in the Saintonge,[4] but there is not much else to be found regarding such a man. How was Ademar supposed to have known that Robert was a 'savant homme de loi' when writing his chronicle over a century and a half later?

It might be being overly suspicious to point out that the near contemporary *Annales Floriacenses*, as also copied by the tenth-century Continuator of Ado of Vienne, after mentioning the fight of the two Aquitanian *principes* Landric and Emeno, then immediately go on to say: 'Rhothbertus quo atque Ramnulfus viri mirae potentiae, armisque strenui, et inter primos ipsi priores, Northmannorum gladio necantur.'[5] Of course this is a report of the 'battle' at Brissarthe in September 866, *Rhothbertus* being Robert the Strong and *Ramnulfus* being

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[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 145; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 227.

[2] Cf. K. F. Werner, 'Ademar von Chabannes und die Historia pontificum et comitum Engolismensium', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 19 (1963), and J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes'.

[3] J. Gillingham, 'Ademar of Chabannes', p. 43, n. 16: 'It is likely that he was also able to use oral tradition, but the earliest indication of this type of information comes in chapter 20 - the account of Vulgrin as a tireless warrior against the Vikings and as the first builder of the castles of Marcillac and Mastac. Vulgrin, the count who died in 886 and whose tomb was claimed by St Cybard, became [...] the founding father of a dynasty of counts. Stories about him would very probably be familiar to a monk of St Cybard, but there is no hint of traditional lore contained in the information in Ademar's chapters 16 to 19.'

[4] L. Delisle, 'Notices', p. 316.

[5] *Annales Floriacenses* and *Continuator of Ado of Vienne*: *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 2, pp. 254, 324. One might also mention that Regino of Prüm, writing at the beginning of the tenth century, says retrospectively and just before reporting the siege of Angers in 873 that: 'After they [the Northmen] had killed Robert and Ranulf and several other well-born men who were defending with arms the frontiers of their homeland, because God was angry with the inhabitants of the land and since nobody could be found to resist their violence [...]': cf. Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon s.a.* 873: ed. Kurze, pp. 105-6; trans. MacLean, p. 168. Regino had previously related the circumstances of Robert and Ramnulf's deaths at, and just three days after, the battle at Brissarthe in September 866, but *s.a.* 867: Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 92-93; trans. MacLean, pp. 153-54, and see also P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 196. It has to be said that this is very similar to Ademar of Chabannes's story (written a century later) of the arrival of Vulgrin, Ramnulf and Robert in 866 and the former's subsequent fights with the Northmen.

Ramnulf I the count of Poitiers. But does this not rather resemble Ademar's account? After telling of Landric fighting Emeno, Ademar then immediately thereafter talks of the otherwise unknown Robertus *legis doctum* and of a Rannulfus/Ramnulfus going to a *castrum* created to provide defence against the Northmen.

Of course, neither the *Annals of Angoulême* nor the *Chronicle of Aquitaine* (and hence also not Ademar himself) breathe a word about this important fight north of the Loire which happened precisely in 866, but it cannot be excluded that Ademar had seen the *Annales Floriacenses* bringing together Robert, Ramnulf and the Northmen.[1] Karl Ferdinand Werner once correctly said with regard to Ademar's work that it had 'bemerkenswerten Beziehungen', (that is noteworthy relationships), with the historiography of Fleury.[2] Had Ademar used his own charter-derived note concerning a Ramnulf and a Robert being together, seen perhaps the *Annales Floriacenses* and put two and two together and made five?

But perhaps Ademar's story of Robert might in some way have been derived from his own family history?

In Ademar's later anecdotes this Robert who supposedly came with Vulgrin and Ramnulf is never heard of again. But is it a coincidence that in Ademar's own direct and extended family line the name of Robert is quite a common and important one? Sébastien Fray has impeccably analysed and worked through all the genealogical matters. Briefly put, and just for what concerns us here, Ademar's lineage goes back to the counts Turpio (d. 863) and his brother Emeno, who died in 866.[3] Emeno married a sister of the 'Robertian' count of Troyes, Robert I 'Portecarquois'. This is how the name Robert enters the family. They had two sons called Ademar, who became count of Poitiers, and Alleaume. They also had a daughter called Immène (the feminine form of Emeno) who married a Gauzbert. These two had a son called Robert who himself had various sons and daughters by two separate wives. By one wife he had sons called Boson, who was an abbot and bishop, Gauzbert and Ademar, who were both Limousin viscounts, and daughters called Deda and *Fareldis*. By another wife he had two sons called Oldelric and Robert. This Robert was called *vetus comes* in a charter of 932.[4] He too had a

[1] Elsewhere Ademar certainly borrowed from the late tenth-century Berry *Miracles of Saint-Genulf* and these have strong connections with the Fleury historiographical tradition; for which see Chapter 13.
[2] K. F. Werner, 'Ademar von Chabannes', p. 323. Ademar was very aware of the Fleury historigraphical tradition and used it on occasion in his *Chronico*n. For which see in the first instance: P. Bourgain, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, pp. LXIII-LXIV; G. Pon, in *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 17 and n. 62; J. L. Lemaître, *Mourir à Saint-Martial : la commémoration des morts et les obituaires à Saint-Martial de Limoges du XIe au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1989), pp. 365-66.
[3] For all these genealogical matters see É. de Saint-Phalle, 'Comtes de Troyes et de Poitiers'; S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque*, pp. 1347-48.
[4] This does rather ressemble Ademar's description of his, supposedly earlier, Robert as a *legis doctum*.

grandson called Robert. In a collateral line of the same family Bishop Turpio of Limoges (d. 944) also had a nephew called Robert,[1] and Turpio himself was the great-granduncle of Ademar of Chabannes himself. All the repeated mentions of these Roberts were recorded in charters of the Limousin abbey of Beaulieu. It is not completely impossible that Ademar had seen one or more of these charters, which he may have known concerned members of his own family, and decided to weave one of these Roberts into his story regarding the arrival of Vulgrin in Aquitaine. Regarding Robert, Ademar writes:

> Quant à son prédécesseur Turpion,[2] de naissance très illustre, oncle de Robert, vicomte d'Aubusson, il fut très généreux dans le service de Dieu, et honora grandement Odon, abbé du monastère de Cluny. Le révérendissime Odon, à la prière de Turpion, publia la vie de saint Géraud et composa un ouvrage très utile sur le mépris du monde. Cet évêque brilla dans sa vie de nombreux miracles et, à sa mort, à Aubusson, il fut enseveli dans la basilique de Saint-Vaury.[3]

This Robert is mentioned in Odo of Cluny's *Vita sancti Geraldi* and it thus seems clear that Ademar had a copy of this work.[4]

All of these ideas, or speculations if one prefers, are worthy of much closer scholarly examination and assessment. Yet it seems to me that it was likely from some such sources that Ademar took his character of Robert *legis doctum* and inserted him into his obviously concocted story of the arrival of Vulgrin, Ramnulf and Robert in Aquitaine in *c*.866.

More about fortifications

Putting to one side all the very serious doubts about whether we should place any faith at all in Ademar's anecdote, it is not impossible (though unlikely) that Vulgrin had actually built these two small *castra* sometime during his twenty years as count of Angoulême, although if he really did so this was most unlikely prompted by Northmen still operating in the area.

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[1] As mentioned by Ademar himself in book III, chap. 25 of his *Chronicon*, for which see below.
[2] This Turpio was bishop of Limoges from *post* 897- 944.
[3] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 25, pp. 229-30. Ademar's MS 'A' says just: 'Fuerat autem successor Turpionis episcopi avunculi Roberti, vicecomitis Albucensis': *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 147. In Ademar's own day the viscounts of Aubusson were descended from a Rainaud (Ramnulf) who was not necessarily related to this Robert: see S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque*, p. 1237, n. 5375, pp. 1292-94.
[4] See *Odo Cluniacensis*, *De vita sancti Geraldi, Auriliacensis comitis, libri quatuor*, *PL* 133, col. 639-704; *Collationum libri tres*, *PL* 133, col. 518-638. Also see *Commemoratio abbatum Lemovicensium*, ed. H. Duplès-Agier, *Chroniques de Saint-Martial de Limoges*, *publiées d'après les manuscrits originaux* (Paris, 1874), p. 4: 'octavus Abbas Aimo […] Hic amicitam habuit cum sancto Odone, Cluniacensi abbate, cui jussit edere vitam sancti Geraldi.'

In 868, just one or two years after Vulgrin had supposedly arrived in Aquitaine to take over the county of Angoulême, the fortifications of Angoulême were rebuilt,[1] possibly by Vulgrin himself and maybe on Charles the Bald's orders or at his instigation.[2] It was also from around this time, and the years that followed, that various defences were starting to be put in place to prevent the Northmen from being able in the future to come up the Seine and its tributaries.[3] On the Loire a defensive bridge may have been built at *Les Ponts-de-Cé* shortly after the siege of Angers in 873.[4] In addition, in 869 Charles ordered that the *civitates* of Le Mans and Tours 'should be fortified by their inhabitants, so that they could provide defensive strongholds against the Northmen for the surrounding populations,'[5] and at about the same time Orléans was starting to be fortified by its bishop, Walter.[6] Furthermore, as well as all these generally royal or episcopal initiatives, in the southern part of France small *castra* and *tours* were first starting to appear.[7] These were hastily built by local magnates and were mostly in places where the Northmen had never been present or even threatened.[8]

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[1] *AAng* 868, p. 486: '868. Et in ipso anno pridie Kal. Junii Aeaqualisma civitas adgreditur reedificari.'

[2] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 57: 'Avec le choc brutal et l'affolement des vingt premières années, la situation a commencé d'évoluer à partir de l'échec de Siegfried en 865. La progressive reprise en main est liée à la nomination de Vulgrin en 867 : l'année suivante, nous savons que l'on commença de reconstruire Angoulême'; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 179: 'The first urban site to be fortified may have been Angoulême, where reconstruction began on 31 May 868. Although it was not specified that this rebuilding included fortification, the inhabitants' desire to be able to withstand future Viking attacks makes it likely that this was the case. The work was presumably carried out by Vulgrin, Count of Angoulême from 866 until his death in 886. As Vulgrin was a relative of Charles the Bald and one of his more faithful magnates, it seems certain that the measure met with the King's approval, and may even have been instigated by him'; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 212: 'It was Wulfgrin presumably who saw to the rebuilding of the fortifications of Angoulême on royal orders in 868'. In general, I do not disagree with this line, although in all honesty it must be said that there is no evidence at all in the record that Vulgrin was one of Charles the Bald's more faithful magnates. The only evidence that Vulgrin was a relative of Charles and had been appointed by him comes from Ademar of Chabannes whose testimony S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 179, elsewhere briskly but categorically dismisses with the comment: 'Vulgrin also built castles at Marcillac and Matha, but, as J. Gillingham has demonstrated, Ademar's work cannot be trusted unless it is independently confirmed by earlier sources.'

[3] S. Coupland, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald'; F. Lot, 'Mélanges carolingiens (suite). II, Le pont de Pitres' [hereafter 'Le pont de Pitres'], *Le Moyen Âge*, 2nd series, vol. 9 (1905), pp. 1-27,

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 77, 183-84; *idem*, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald', pp. 9-10.

[5] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, p. 166; trans. Nelson, pp. 163-64. At Tours this rebuilding was finished by 877 at the latest. On the defense of cities in general see P. Depreux, 'A la recherche des défenseurs de la cité à l'époque carolingienne', *Les petits cahiers d'Anatole*, 2 (2001), pp. 1-19.

[6] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 36, p. 79; P. Depreux, 'A la recherche des défenseurs', p. 9; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 181: 'Given the proximity of Orléans to Tours and Le Mans and the continued presence of the Vikings on the Loire at this time, it seems certain that Walter's fortification work was part of a programme of regional defence. It would follow from this that Orleans, too, was fortified at the King's command in 869.'

[7] A. R. Lewis, *The Development of Southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, 1965), pp. 130-35.

[8] According to A. R. Lewis, *ibid*., pp. 132-33, the only place where this was not the case was 'Western Aquitaine', and the two castles he mentions here, Marcillac and 'Matas', were built by Vulgrin to 'thwart Viking raiders'; but this is just to accept Ademar's story at face value. But even as late as the early eleventh century, Yves Chauvin and Georges Pon, *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, p. 26, say regarding the families in Aquitaine who erected *castra* and *castella* that these fortifications were mostly 'forteresses en terre et en bois, édifiées en quelques jours, facilement détruites et incendiées mais tout aussi rapidement reconstruites'. They were most certainly no more than this in the ninth century.

The reason why these small fortifications were built had everything to do with local struggles and, as far as we can tell, nothing to do with any real 'peur des Normands'. This was true in western Aquitaine as well. In a penetrating recent article concerning the fortification of many monasteries and collegiate churches during the ninth and tenth centuries throughout the Carolingian realm, Luc Bourgeois demonstrates how these fortifications have generally been interpreted by historians as a response to raids, whether by vikings, Saracens or Hungarians, but he concludes: 'Considérées dans un contexte historique plus large, elles apparaissent principalement comme des operations politiques liées aux tensions internes de l'empire carolingien, à la naissance des principautés et la volonté d'indépendance [...] par rapport aux pouvoirs royaux et épiscopaux.'[1] Earlier he concluded much the same thing regarding the fortification of the residences of elites.[2] If two small *castra* at Marcillac and Matha really were built by Count Vulgrin sometime between 866 and 886 - which I highly doubt - they were probably built for the same reason. In this regard it is perhaps pertinent to point out that Vulgrin had been sent to Aquitaine immediately after just such a local struggle between Emeno, count of Angoulême, and Landric, supposedly the count of Saintes, which had resulted in both of their deaths. It may well have been that two *castra*, which were situated precisely on the borders of the Angoumois and the Saintonge, had been constructed by Vulgrin to provide some modicum of protection for his 'viscount' Ramnulf against other hostile local rivals.

Finally, we should look at the location of Marcillac and Matha. Do these locations make any sense as defensive sites chosen to protect against possible future Scandinavian incursions? I think not.

Let us consider Marcillac first. The eleventh-century fort which Ademar tells us of was situated at Marcillac-Lanville (dep. Charente, cant. Rouillac), and is now called *Le château*.[3] The site lies some distance from the Charente and would have been completely irrelevant and of no use whatsoever in preventing any Northmen from sailing further up the Charente. Furthermore, a little wooden structure, even atop a motte, would have stood no chance against fleets or warbands of Northmen who had previously managed to capture such impressive, and sometimes fortified, cities as Paris, Bordeaux, Tours, Poitiers, Angoulême, Saintes and so on;

[1] L. Bourgeois, 'La fortification des abbayes et des collégiales aux IXe-Xe siècles : quelques pistes de recherche', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis*, 95 (2018), pp. 193-208, at p. 206.

[2] L. Bourgeois, 'Les résidences des élites et les fortifications du haut Moyen Âge en France et en Belgique dans leur cadre européen : aperçu historiographique (1955-2005)', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 194 (2006), pp. 113-41, at p. 122.

[3] According to A. Debord, '*Castrum* et *Castellum*', p. 106, 'Le château' was 'une motte considerable avec sa basse-cour domine toujours le village. Elle a malheureusement été éventrée profondément au XIXe siècle'.

although as a site to provide a modicum of safety against local rivals it could well find its place. The great historian of the area André Debord, who vehemently believed Ademar's testimony, probably understood that the site of the later fort at Marcillac-Lanville made no sense at all as a place to defend the Charente against Northmen in the ninth century. In 1979 he thus suggested: 'Le castrum du IXe siècle bâti contre les Normands était vraisemblablement ailleurs : peut-être sur les bords de la Charente, ou chemins creux, sur un bombement naturel appelé "La motte", dessinent un quadrilatère d'environ deux hectares.'[1] This is pure speculation; this little motte like so many others in the region could have been thrown up at any time as Debord himself examined.[2]

Finally, perhaps a few words regarding the supposed *castrum* at Matha, which we must situate in the Saintonge (dep. Charente-Maritime, arr. Saint-Jean-d'Angély), are in order.[3] A small *castrum* of some sort was built there at some unknown time. It was, says Debord, 'une fortification de plaine, bâtie sur les bords marécageux de l'Antenne',[4] but we cannot just assume as Debord does that it was built by Vulgrin in the ninth century.[5] Once again even if a small wooden fortification had been built at Matha by Vulgrin it would not have been of any use as protection against the Northmen and it location in a swampy marsh tells us nothing about the purpose for which it may have been constructed, except that being surrounded by a marsh would make it more difficult to reach for any enemy.

Debord, believing Ademar as he always did, says, 'Nous savons que Vulgrin construisit contre les Normands les châteaux de Marcillac (en Angoumois) et de Matha, indubitablement saintongeais',[6] elsewhere adding:

> La présence d'une base viking à Taillebourg et dans les environs explique parfaitement les raisons pour lesquelles le comte d'Angoulême, Vulgrin Ier, bâtit contre eux les forteresses de Matha et de Marcillac : ceux deux localités sont situées sur un très vieux

[1] A. Debord, '*Castrum* et *Castellum*', p. 106, n. 39.
[2] See A. Debord, 'La recherche en matière de fortifications médiévales dans la région Poitou-Charentes : bilan et perspectives', in *Sites défensifs et sites fortifiés au Moyen Age entre Loire et Pyrénées. Actes du premier colloque Aquitania, Limoges, 20-22 mai 1987*, *Aqvitania*, supplément 4 (1990), pp. 151-61.
[3] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 64, p. 50, figure 15; *idem*, '*Castrum* et *Castellum*', p. 106.
[4] A. Debord, '*Castrum* et *Castellum*', p. 106, to which he adds, 'Elle a beaucoup souffert de la construction d'un château au XVIe siècle, lui-même à peu près entièrement rasé à l'heure actuelle. Dans son état présent, l'ancien castrum se présente comme une plate-forme ovalaire, baignée sur deux côtés par la rivière qu'elle domine de 3 à 4 mètres et dont la superficie est de l'ordre d'un demi-hectare.'
[5] *Ibid*: 'Matha en Saintonge, le castrum, construit par le comte d'Angoulême Vulgrin contre les Normands avant 886 […]'
[6] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 64.

chemin, sans doute pré-romain, connu sous le nom de chemin Saunier,[1] qui part de Saint-Savinien non loin de Taillebourg et mène vers l'Angoumois septentrional. La localisation des deux fortifications n'a de sens qu'en fonction de cette voie, et par conséquent de la région Saint-Savinien-Taillebourg. A partir d'elle, en outre, on rejoint facilement la voie romaine Saintes-Poitiers par Aulnay, par laquelle on atteint Melle (incendiée en 848) et Poitiers (dévastée en 863).[2]

This presentation contains a number of assumptions; some are explicit but some are not. First, as was discussed above, we certainly do not 'know' that Vulgrin constructed these 'fortifications', much less that they were constructed 'contre les Normands', nor even that they were built at this time. It is only a belief in Ademar of Chabannes that allows one to say so. Second, as also noted earlier, there may indeed have been a Scandinavian base at Taillebourg or 'dans les environs' at different times between 845 and 865, although even this can be contested. But it is purely a lurking assumption and an unwarranted belief in Ademar that allows Debord to propose that this base continued to be used for many years after 865. Third, even if the two fortifications were built by Vulgrin at this time it is not true to say that their localisation only makes sense because they were on an old road leading from Saint-Savinien-Taillebourg, where of course there was supposedly still a 'viking' base. As has been noted, two tiny wooden fortifications would have been of no use whatever in preventing Scandinavian fleets or warbands progressing up the Charente or using this road heading either towards Poitiers or even towards Melle, and the two attacks Debord quietly slips in here, Poitiers in 863 and Melle in 848, most likely used routes other than this later 'chemin Saunier'. Finally, even assuming the two fortifications were really built at this time, which is to be doubted, their situation on this road probably had everything to do with local rivalries and nothing whatever to do with protection against chimerical, imagined or just feared future Scandinavian incursions.

It would have been easy to dismiss Ademar's *Chronicle* as Coupland for example did regarding the building of two *castra* by saying: 'Vulgrin also built castles at Marcillac and Matha, but, as Gillingham has demonstrated, Ademar's work cannot be trusted unless it is independently confirmed by earlier sources.'[3] But I hope the above discussion will be useful to

[1] There is really no evidence that this road was 'pre-roman'. The 'chemin Saunier' is also a much later term, and the *salines* in Lower Poitou (in the Aunis and the Saintonge) did not start to be exploited until several decades later, at the earliest. In fact, there is no evidence that this 'chemin Saunier' had already been established in the ninth century.
[2] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 54.
[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 179.

historians examining this question in the future. Ultimately though, and as with the case of Archbishop Frotar, I do not think that Ademar of Chabannes can be used to support the idea that for some years, or even decades, after 865 the Northmen had remained active in Aquitaine south of the Loire.

Summary comments on the 860s in Aquitaine

This chapter, and the previous two, have taken us far and wide as we have attempted to understand the origins and trajectories of the Scandinavian fleets and warbands operating in Aquitaine until 865.

This decade is a very clear example of the truth of Simon Coupland's statement that 'Viking armies were continually changing in their composition, leadership and location. New elements arrived as old elements left, and the theatre of operations could change from year to year. It is therefore misleading to speak of the "Seine Vikings", "the Loire Vikings" or even "the Great Army", except with reference to a specific army at a particular time'.[1]

It was two groups of Northmen that had come to southern Brittany/the lower Loire in late 861 to early 862 which undertook the two deep penetrations into Aquitaine in 863-865, and these Northmen themselves were a combination of those who had previously been active on the Seine and the Somme - and even gone to England - in the years before, and others who had returned from the second expedition to Spain and the Mediterranean during the years 858/59-861. These latter Northmen had also likely themselves set off for Spain from Aquitaine.

One mystery that it has not been possible to explore further is what became of Sigfrid's 'Charente' Northmen after 865. It has been argued by myself and others that they did not remain in Aquitaine much longer, although I have elsewhere offered a few tentative thoughts on Sigfrid's identity and what he may have done in future years,[2] an issue I hope to address more fully in the future.

In later chapters succeeding decades will be examined, up to 890. During most of this period the Scandinavians' activities in western France were restricted to the Loire valley and Brittany and, with the exception of an attack on Bourges in *c*.867, not south of the Loire into Aquitaine proper. But before doing so in the next chapter we will, at least partially, address the hoary question of Scandinavian activity in the far south of ancient Aquitaine, in fact in Gascony south of the Garonne, in the mid-ninth century.

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[1] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', p. 195.
[2] S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark', pp. 38-40.

Chapter 8

OPERATIONS IN GASCONY IN THE NINTH CENTURY: THE CREATION OF A MYTH?

It has been suggested in previous chapters that there could well have been some incursions south of the Garonne into Gascony in the ninth century; in fact there probably were. These may have happened in 844-845 when there were Northmen going to and from Toulouse some of whom seem to have stayed in Aquitaine for a while whilst others went off to the Iberian Peninsula, or perhaps in 848 or 855 following the two attacks on Bordeaux, or rather less likely in 864 when Pippin II went with the Northmen to Toulouse, or even in 865 when Sigfrid's force having returned from attacking Clermont was still conducting raids from the Charente.

But based on a couple of late and very dubious or unreliable/hypothetical Gascon charters and legendary histories, over the centuries some eminent Gascon historians have tried to assert that there was a decades-long presence of Scandinavians in Gascony, starting from 840. One should mention in particular Pierre de Marca's *Histoire de Béarn* published in 1640,[1] and Louis-Clément Brugèles's *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch* published in 1746.[2] Much more will be said about these two authors' works throughout this chapter.

In more recent times, and very often based on the views of these two earlier writers, although somewhat modifying them, it was Renée Mussot-Goulard who constructed an extensive, garbled and very debatable edifice purporting to show that the Northmen arrived in Gascony in 840 and remained there on and off for decades, attacking and destroying almost all the episcopal and other towns south of the Garonne, even reaching as far as Cauterets in the High Pyrenees and undertaking no less than two trips from the river Adour to Pamplona in northern Spain. This construct is most fully elaborated in her 1982 book *Les princes de Gascogne*,[3] which as its name suggests is generally concerned with these 'princes' and their genealogies and is an extremely interesting and stimulating thesis, although it has proved to be quite controversial in France and is nowadays rather regrettably rarely discussed in any detail.[4]

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[1] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn, contenant l'histoire des rois de Navarre, des Ducs de Gascogne, Marquis de Gothie, Princes de Béarn, Comtes de Carcassonne, de Foix et de Bigorre. Avec diverses observations géographiques, et historiques, concernant principalement lesdits Païs* (Paris, 1640).

[2] L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch suivies de celles des comtes du même diocèse* (Toulouse, 1746).

[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*.

[4] One recent and rather excellent exception is M. Pelat, *Les identités ethniques en Novempopulanie*.

Mussot-Goulard's treatment of Northmen in Gascony in both the ninth and tenth centuries is scattered in bits and pieces throughout her book and it is very difficult to make any sense of. But it is her work that has been used as the basis for some later more 'popular', not rigorous works such as, just for example, those of the Caen-based literary scholar Jean Renaud,[1] and the many historical-novel-like imaginings of Joël Supéry.[2] It is for this reason that in a study of the connections of the Northmen in Aquitaine it is perhaps useful to examine Mussot-Goulard's ideas concerning the Northmen in Gascony in more depth than has yet been done in the nearly forty years since the publication of her book.

This chapter will address the ninth century; some of her thoughts on the tenth century and even later will be discussed in later chapters.

Was there a Scandinavian arrival in Gascony in 840?

According to Renée Mussot-Goulard the *Normands* first arrived in any force in Gascony in 840 and then spent many years there, even decades. Regarding this arrival, she says:

> En effet, à partir de 840, les Normands pénétrèrent en pays gascon, tant par la Garonne que par l'Adour et le souvenir de leur passage a laissé, localement, des traces pendant plusieurs générations. La première vague a déferlé sur Bordeaux. Mais il a fallu trois attaques pour réduire cette importante cité bien défendue par ses murailles. En 840, il y eut sans doute une première démonstration de force de la part des Normands venus en reconnaissance. Ils ont ainsi repéré les lieux et préparé leurs venues ultérieures, selon la technique qui leur est propre. Cependant il faut signaler que cette même année 840 a été celle de la mort de l'empereur Louis-le-Pieux. Le partage qu'il avait établi en 839 prenait pleinement effet. Charles pouvait entrer en possession d'une Aquitaine à laquelle Pépin II ne voulait pas renoncer. Les troubles politiques ont donc constitué la toile de fond de l'invasion normande.'[3]

Elsewhere Mussot-Goulard suggests, but very contradictorily, that: 'La chute de Bordeaux et peut-être la captivité de son évêque, ou sa mort, expliquent l'absence d'un représentant de

[1] For example J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*; *idem*, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings*.
[2] See most recently J. Supéry, *La Saga des Vikings : Une autre histoire des invasions* (Paris, 2018). For a harsh but I think generally fair critique of this work see A. Gautier, 'Une principauté viking en Gascogne? À propos d'une imposture'.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 96-97.

l'église bordelaise […] en 840,'[1] - at a supposed reunion of bishops at Auch in 840 which will be discussed later. She is explicitly saying here that there was a *chute* (fall/capture) of Bordeaux in 840 by/to the Northmen and not just an initial *reconnaissance* by them.

But where does this idea of the year 840 come from which supposedly included a *reconnaissance* of Bordeaux? It seems from her annotations that originally the idea may have derived from a misreading and misunderstanding of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*. In note 26, p. 97, she purportedly reproduces the text of this chronicle given by Dom Brugèles in his C*hroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*. This actually reads, and quite correctly: 'Anno 851: Classis Normannorum fluvium Sequanam ingressa est ipsa die 3 id. Octobris, duce Hoseri qui aliquot ante annos Rotomagnum urbem depopularet ac incendio cremaret, id est 841 et per annos undecim multas regionis latrocindando occuparet, inter quas est urbem Burdegalim munitissinam, caput regionis novempopulanae de qua tunc progressus fuerat.'[2] Mussot-Goulard, however, makes an amendment to what the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* says, as given accurately by Brugèles. She quotes Brugèles as writing: 'Anno 851: Classis Normannorum fluvium Sequanam ingressa est ipsa die 3 id. Octobris, duce Hoseri (sic) qui aliquot ante annos Rotomagnum urbem depopularet ac incendio cremaret, id est 840 et per annos undecim multas regionis latrocindando occuparet, inter quas est urbem Burdegalim munitissinam, caput regionis novempopulanae de qua tunc progressus fuerat'.[3] Not only is this a mistranscription but Mussot-Goulard has it coming from page 9 of Brugèles's 'proofs of part 2', whereas actually it comes from page 11 of his 'proofs of part 1'. The incorrect page reference is no doubt just a simple referencing error,[4] which we all make, but more importantly she has blatantly changed the text of the *Chronicle* from 'id est anno 841' to 'id est anno 840'. We simply cannot tell whether this change was intentional or not. A scholar more suspicious than I might suspect it was not just a slip because Mussot-Goulard constantly repeats this quite wrong date and builds her whole edifice upon it.[5]

As was shown earlier in this thesis the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* is here referring to Oskar's two appearances on the Seine: the first in 841 and then his return there in late 851. These two

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 92.
[2] L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 11. This is also correctly given in P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 193, n. VII. Cf. also Jean Laporte's edition of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* referenced earlier, as well as other earlier editions.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 97, n. 26.
[4] This is not the only place where she gets the page reference wrong; but she gets the page reference right elsewhere: *ibid*., p. 92, n. 176.
[5] Indeed at *ibid*., p. 92, n. 176, Mussot-Goulard says quoting the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* as given by Brugèles: 'Per annos undecim (post 840) multas regions latrocinando' etc. Note how 'post 840' is inserted again here. See also *ibid*., p. 91: 'Les Annales de Fontenelle, relatant les faits de 840, donnent à Bordeaux le titre de *Caput regionis Novempopulanae*.'

dates have nothing to do with the activities of these Northmen in the intervening years - which were certainly mostly in Aquitaine. The siege and eventual capture of Bordeaux actually happened over the winter of 847-848 which we know from Prudentius's part of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* and the *Annals of Angoulême*. The Fontenelle chronicler is just placing the capture of Bordeaux in this period and his reference that after the capture of Bordeaux the Northmen involved 'de qua tunc progressus fuerat' is referring to their subsequent raids in Aquitaine. Frédéric Boutoulle quite rightly says: 'Si la source [the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*] désigne un chef normand ayant attaqué la ville [Bordeaux], Asgeirr, la chronologie qu'elle pose soulève quelques problèmes, puisqu'elle fait remonter à 840 ou 841 ses déprédations en Gascogne, ce qui n'est pas recoupé. L'annaliste ne fait-il pas plutôt référence au siège et à la prise de 848 intégrés dans un ensemble des onze années précédant 851.'[1]

It could well be that Mussot-Goulard got her date of 840 by subtracting 'eleven years' from the date of 851 and thereby got 840.[2] Many chroniclers in the Carolingian period counted years by including the first and the last, as indeed was the case in calculating dates in months inclusively from the *nones* or *ides* of a particular month. Thus, if one includes the year 841 when the Northmen came up the Seine in the spring of that year and 851 when they arrived in October (and stayed until 852) we do in fact get eleven years. But, and much more importantly, the year 841 (not 840) concerns an event on the Seine not at Bordeaux or in 'Gascony'. In fact, I think that Mussot-Goulard may have got the idea of the date 840 from Brugèles, who she uses and references a great deal, and who quite wrongly says that after an attack by the *Sarrazins* around 724 there was 'une autre destruction des Citez de Gascogne, par les Normans & Danois, en 840. 41. & 44'.[3] Not one of these three dates is correct. Brugèles even elsewhere contradicts himself. After mentioning Charles the Bald's reign in Aquitaine, 'from 831 to 840'[*sic*], and Count 'Aznar-Sanche', 'qui commanda depuis 832, jusqu'en 836',[4] he wrote:

> Quelques-tems après, les Pirates Normands, sortis du païs Septentrional, apellé à présent Norvége, et alors Normannie, qui dès l'année 820, avoient commencé de faire des courses en France; profitant de la discorde que fut entre les enfans de l'Empereur Louis le Debonnaire, decedé l'an 840, se joignirent aux Danois leurs voisins, & tous ensemble

[1] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 26.
[2] Cf. R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 92, n. 176.
[3] L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 9.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 68; see also p. 249 for the same thing. The idea that Charles the Bald ruled in Aquitaine since 831 is a complete misunderstanding of history.

> se jetterent en 841 sur les Gaules, qu'ils ravagerent cruellement: ils vinrent de suite jusqu'en Aquitaine, sous la conduite du Prince Haddingue leur Chef.[1]

To Brugèles's credit this contains a number of real historical facts, such as the Scandinavian attack on 'France' in 820,[2] which was not however the first, the death of Louis the Pious in 840 and the reference to the arrival of the Northmen in 841 (on the Seine for sure but supposedly in Gascony as well),[3] after which they came *de suite* to Aquitaine, which is true in so far as they sacked Nantes in 843 and then did subsequently operate in western Aquitaine in the years thereafter. Although that the earlier Northmen from *Norvége* [*sic*] were then joined by 'leurs voisins' the *Danois*, who then 'ensemble se jetterent en 841 sur les Gaules', is just a very early example of a much too binary distinction between 'Norwegians' and 'Danes' operating in France, perpetuated by many later historians. Furthermore, that the leader of the Northmen, on the Seine we might presume, who then 'de suite' came to Aquitaine was called *Haddingue*, evidently the legendary 'Hasting', was clearly not the case.[4] It is all rather muddled and demonstrably quite false.

Even earlier, in the seventeenth century, Pierre de Marca also got himself into a slight muddle regarding events and dates. Similar to Brugèles, who was later clearly very much influenced by him, Marca mentions, to modernise the spelling and punctuation a little but not completely:

> Comme le desordre de la maison Roiale, & les divisions qui nasquirent entre le Roi Charles le Chauve, & les enfants du jeune Pepin, donnerent le moyen aux Normans, de faire une descente en Aquitaine dés [=dès] l'an 833 pendant la vie de Louïs le Debonaire

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[2] This attack in 820 was on the island of Bouin in the bay of Bourgneuf, but strangely Mussot-Goulard makes it on 'Born' in Gascony, which I shall highlight more later on.

[3] L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 9.

[4] The Northmen on the Seine in 841 who we may reasonably say did more or less *de suite* come to Aquitaine (by 843 in fact) were led by a chieftain called, to use my nomenclature, Oskar. *Hasting*, or *Haddingue* as Brugèles calls him (no doubt taken from some mention he had found of the legend of *Hadingus*/*Haddingus*, or perhaps more likely simply from some earlier French text mentioning the supposed equivalence of the names *Hasting* and *Hading*, such as in, for example, P. Viels, *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saincts*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1596), p. 137), only appears first in Regino of Prüm's early tenth-century *Chronicon* under the year 866. It is pure imagination, or perhaps more graciously just a false deduction, on Brugèles's part that the 'Norwegians' and 'Danes' had joined together and 'tous ensemble se jetterent en 841 sur les Gaules', and that after this 'ils vinrent de suite jusqu'en Aquitaine, sous la conduite du Prince Haddingue leur Chef'. For an introduction to the legend of Hadingus and the attempts made to equate it with 'Hasting' compare F. Amory, 'The Viking Hasting in Franco-Scandinavian Legend', pp. 266-67; G. Dumezil, *Du mythe au roman: la saga de Hadingus et autres essais* (Paris, 1970); A. Ghidoni, 'Archéologie d'une chanson de geste. Quelques hypothèses sur Gormund et Isembart', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 227 (2014), pp. 244-66, at pp. 264-66.

: & depuis en Gascogne l'année 841, ils continuerent leurs ravages du costé de l'Aquitaine ; De manière qu'ayans pris terre entre Bourdeaux, & Saintes, l'an 843. il y eut une sanglante journée, & grandement funeste aux François, qui furent entierement defaits, & tués sur la place, à la reserve de peu de persones, qui fuirent honteusement. Siguin Duc des Gascons, fut pris & tué en ce combat, comme escrit Loup Abbé de Ferrieres, disant que cette nouvelle lui avoit esté confirmée avec serment, par ceux qui venoient des quartiers d'Aquitaine. Celui que l'Abbé de Ferrieres nomme Duc des Gascons, Ademar le qualifie Comte de Bourdeaux, et de Sainctes, saisant le recit de cette victoire des Normans, en sa Chronique manuscrite. Ce que l'on doit concilier en disant, qu'il avoit le Gouvernement de Sainctes, conjoinctement avec le Duché de Gascogne, qui comprenoit sous soi le Comté de Bourdeaux. Et ce moyen on pourra establir le Duc Siguin apres Totilus.[1]

Leaving to one side the question of *duc* Totilus for the time being, the problem with all of this is that all the dates Marca gives are two or more years too early.

Marca's dating of a 'descente en Aquitaine' starting in 833 is mysterious. It starts with a sentence telling of 'le desordre de la maison Roiale', and how this disorder gave 'le moyen aux Normans' to make a descent into Aquitaine in 833 'pendant la vie de Louïs le Debonaire'.

According to Marca's references for this passage, he says he got this from the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* for 833 ('Chronicon de Gestis Norman. anno 833').[2] Now these royal annals, which were not yet being written by Prudentius, discuss the great troubles in the Frankish realm in this year involving the emperor Louis the Pious and his sons Lothar, Louis the German and Pippin (I) of Aquitaine.[3] Yet what are we to make of a purported *descente* of Northmen into Aquitaine in the same year?[4] I think Marca may also have deduced this date from Ademar's *Chronicon* which Marca also references as his only other source here. Ademar wrote in text A: 'Interea cum tractandum esset de pace inter Normannos et Francos et de rebus Eroldi […], Eroldus, nimis cupidus honoris, irrupit pacem per obsides firmatam, accensis et depredatis villis

[1] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 192.
[2] He was probably using the 12th-century compilation of extracts called the *Chronicon de Gestis Normannorum in Francia* found inserted into the *Liber floridus*; cf. *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 1, ed. Pertz (Hanover, 1826), pp. 532-36, at p. 532.
[3] *AB* 833: ed. Grat, pp. 8-11; trans. Nelson, pp. 26-28.
[4] The first very short paragraph of the *Chronicon de Gestis Normannorum* (*ibid.*) has the Northmen's arrival on the 'Aquitanian littoral' and the isle of Bouin [actually in 820, but not from *AB*], and the attack on Frisia [in 834 from the *AB*] being in 'anno Domini 833, regnante Ludovico Augusto […]'. Marca seems to have assumed this all happened in the same year: 833.

plurimus Normannorum.'[1] There is no doubt Ademar took this from the *Royal Frankish Annals* concerning the year 828, which say, to use Bernhard Scholz's translation: 'Near the border of Nordmannia in the meantime negotiations were planned to ratify the peace between Norsemen and Franks and to discuss the affair of Heriold […]. But Heriold was too thirsty for action. He broke the peace that had been agreed upon and confirmed by hostages, and burned and pillaged some small villages of the Norsemen.'[2] Similarly for the next year, 829, Ademar borrows here extensively, in fact almost exclusively, from the *Royal Frankish Annals*. After repeating these annals concerning the emperor Louis's activities in 828-29, Ademar says that the Emperor was at Worms when: 'ibi nunciatur ei Normannos velle invadere regionem Saxonie trans Albiam et exercitum eorum propinquare finibus Francorum,' although it later turned out that this planned invasion of Saxony had just been a rumour.[3] This is as well almost a word for word copy of the text of the *Royal Frankish Annals*: 'he heard the news that the Norsemen planned to invade Saxony on the far side of the Elbe and that their army was approaching our borders [...] he found out that the rumour about the Norsemen was false.'[4] Marca also regularly used the *Royal Frankish Annals* elsewhere; and even in a preceding footnote on the same page where he is discussing the matters we are concerned with here.[5] Then, a little later, Ademar says: 'Anno sequenti Normanni Herio insulum incenderunt mense junio, et destitute est a generali monachorum hatitatione [...] et post annos quinque [note this five years] Rainoldus, comes Arbatilicensis, mense septembri, cum Normannis in Herio insula dimient et fugatus,'[6] followed by: 'Anno sequenti, corpus sancti Filiberti de insula Herio VII idus junii et Burgundiam a monachis per fertur'[7]

These matters were explored in Chapter 2, and without wanting to repeat all the details we can say that the fight of the Northmen with Count Rainald of Herbauge took place in 835 and the flight of the monks of Noirmoutier 'the next year', in 836.[8] Now five years back from 835

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[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 14, p. 129. The C text says the same, and has been translated as: 'Cependant, comme on devait parler de la paix entre les hommes du Nord et les Francs et des affaires d'Harald […], Harald, dans son désir excessif du pouvoir, rompit la paix affermie par la livraison d'otages, brulant et pillant de très nombreuses *villae* des hommes du Nord': *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 209.
[2] *RFA s.a.* 828: trans. Scholz, p. 123; *ARF*: ed. Kurze, p. 175.
[3] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 15, p. 130; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 210.
[4] *RFA s.a.* 829, trans. Scholz, p. 124; *ARF*: ed. Kurze, p. 177.
[5] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 193, n. 1. He calls these annals Eginhard's 'Life of Louis'. For a discussion of the prevalent old idea that Einhard wrote the *RFA*, see B. W. Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles*, pp. 6-7.
[6] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 16, p. 131.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp 131-32.
[8] They only arrived in Burgundy many years later.

brings us to 830 and there may have been an attack on Noirmoitier in that year.[1] But none of these dates is given in Ademar's *Chronicon* which Marca says he was using. The only date Ademar gives is DCCCXXVIII for the removal of the bodies of SS Marcellinus and Peter from Rome which appears immediately before all the events we have been discussing.[2] This is also taken from the *Royal Frankish Annals* which give the real date of October 827.[3] We know that Marca used the *Royal Frankish Annals* which Ademar had himself borrowed from regarding the affair of Harald Klak in 828 and 829, and other events in these years. Had perhaps Marca added Ademar's 'five years' to the *Royal Frankish Annals*' discussion of the affair of Harald in 828 and got 833, which he then combined with reports in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* of troubles in the Frankish realm in the same year? Or simpler still, had he just added five years to the only date in Ademar's *Chronicon*, DCCCXXVIII, and reached the same date of 833? One way or the other I think it likely. But there is an even easier explanation. Perhaps Marca had used the C text of Ademar's *Chronicon*. This text whilst still mentioning all the above and the date DCCCXXVIII tells a slightly different story. After telling of Harald and all these events in the North in 828 and 829, it says: 'Nortmanni anno sequenti, cum timerent Saxoniam intrare reflexsis navibus, ad mare Aquitanicam appd ['appulerunt'] et Herio insulam incendunt menso junio [...]', 'L'année suivante, les Normands craignant d'envahir la Saxe, changèrent de cap et abordèrent les rivages de la mer aquitanique; au mois de juin, ils incendient l'île d'Herio d'où les établissements monastiques disparurent […].'[4] So the Northmen either feared the Saxons or feared to invade their territory (which amounts to much the same thing), and therefore they took themselves in their ships to the 'Aquitanian Sea' and attacked and burned Saint-Philibert's monastery on the island of Noirmoutier. So here we find an explicit link between Northmen leaving the North and them arriving in the Aquitanian Sea. Using Ademar as his main source it was doubtless from the foregoing type of reasoning, or something like it, that Marca got his date of 833 for a *descente* by the Northmen on Aquitaine; a descent which probably never happened, or at least not in the year 833.

Next, why did Marca place the arrival of the Northmen in 'Gascony' in 841 and the defeat of Siguin II in 843? Events Marca says stemmed from 'les divisions qui nasquirent entre le Roi Charles le Chauve, & les enfants du jeune Pepin', a statement which makes little sense. There were of course many divisions between Louis the Pious's sons Charles the Bald and his older

[1] Although as discussed in Chapter 2 it is quite possible this happened in 834.
[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 12, p. 129.
[3] *RFA s.a.* 827: trans. Scholz, p. 122; *ARF*: ed. Kurze, p. 174.
[4] J. Lair, *Études critiques,* pp. 104-5; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain, book 3, chap. 16, pp. 130-31; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, pp. 210-11.

half-brothers Lothar I and Louis the German following Louis's death in 840, not least the bloody battle of Fontenoy in June 841 and leading up to the first treaty of Verdun in August 843; but who are 'les enfants du jeune Pepin' meant to be? If the 'jeune Pepin' means Pippin II of Aquitaine (d. *c*.864) this makes no sense at all because Pippin II did not have sons who fought against Charles the Bald. On the other hand, if his father Pippin I (d. 838) is meant (perhaps the 'jeune' being to distinquish him from the eighth-century Frankish king Pippin 'the Short' (d. 768), the son of Charles Martel and grandson of Pippin of Herstal), this makes only a little more sense. Pippin I's son Pippin II of Aquitaine (and less so his younger son Charles, in much later historiography also referred to as 'of Aquitaine') did oppose Charles the Bald in the 840s and later, but in 841 Pippin II (but not his younger brother Charles)[1] had arrived, late though it was, to support Lothar I at the battle of Fontenoy in June 841, and although he was subsequently betrayed by Lothar and was 'still at large in Aquitaine in 842'[2] (to which we might add, and as discussed in an earlier chapter, that Oskar's arrival on the Seine in 841 just weeks before the battle at Fontenoy was probably not just a coincidence but was at the least made with a knowledge of these internal royal Frankish fractures), there is nothing whatsoever in the historical record to enable us to imagine that it was in 841 that Northmen, whoever they might have been, descended into Gascony ('depuis en Gascogne l'année 841' as Marca says).

So in the case of Marca's year of 841 for an arrival of Northmen in 'Gascony', his idea may have originated from the mention of the date of '841' in the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*, on the basis of which he jumped to the conclusion that Oskar's Northmen on the Seine in that year had already been in Aquitaine and even Bordeaux in 841 before they arrived on the Seine, or, perhaps more likely, because he assumed from the same chronicle that after leaving the Seine in 841 they had arrived in Aquitaine in the same year.[3]

In his references for this section Marca also gives Ademar of Chabannes's *Chronicon*, from where he gets that 'Siguin' was count of Bordeaux and Saintes, but he does not reference the *Annals of Angoulême* or even the *Chronicle of Aquitaine*[4] from where Ademar took and embroidered this information (although significantly omitting the date), which both date the battle in which *Sigoinus* was killed to 845. Similarly Abbot Lupus's letter which mentions Northmen arriving between Bordeaux and Saintes and Siguin's death can also very clearly be dated to late 845 (probably between 12 and 22 November) and not 843, because it mentions

[1] Charles lived at Lothar I's court until 848.
[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 125.
[3] P. de Marca uses the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* here: see *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 193, n. VII.
[4] This is probably because he had not seen any manuscripts of these.

that when Lupus had gone to meet Charles on 11 November at Tours the king was away on an expedition against the Bretons, an expedition which culminated in the battle of Ballon on the Vilaine near Redon in Brittany on 22 November 845.[1] But Marca did not make the connection between Charles's expedition against the Bretons and the battle of Ballon with the arrival of the Northmen in Aquitaine, both in 845. Not knowing this date, but looking around for when these events may have happened, perhaps Marca found it in Prudentius's part of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (as found in part in the *Chronicon de Gestis Normannorum in Francia*, referenced by Marca as the 'Chronicon de Gestis Norman'). Here, under the year 843, he would have found a report of the sack of Nantes and the death of its bishop. Thus, it seems to me that what Marca did was take this date and presume the battle with Siguin and his death happened in the same year, which is of course incorrect.

Why are the opinions of historians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries relevant to our present concerns? The answer is that Mussot-Goulard's historical creation regarding the Northmen in Gascony in the ninth century, with which we are primarily concerned here, is situated by her quite explicitly in this long and problematic historiography - although she does come to some slightly different though equally erroneous conclusions to those of both Marca and Brugèles. But often one can almost hear the words of Marca and Brugèles echoing down the centuries when, just for example, Mussot-Goulard writes: 'Le premier fléau qui s'abbattit sur le pays fut la guerre des rois. Le roi Charles le Chauve avait un rival, depuis 839, en Pépin II et leurs querelles semèrent le trouble dans le Sud du royaume,'[2] and a few lines later when she continues with the long section referenced earlier starting with 'à partir de 840, les Normands pénétrèrent en pays gascon'.

Nicolas Bertrand's *Opus de tholosanorum gestis*

Whether Mussot-Goulard first took the year 840 for the arrival of Northmen 'in Gascony' from the *Chronicle of Fontenelle*, which she altered, or whether she got the idea from Dom Brugèles or even from Pierre de Marca will unfortunately never be known. Whatever the case may have been, she was certainly rather obsessed with proving the date of 840. But in support of this date her other main supposed evidence comes from the early sixteenth-century chronicler Nicolas

[1] Lupus of Ferrières, L. Levillain, ed. *Correspondance*, no. 44, p. 186, also see L. Levillain, 'Étude sur les lettres de Loup de Ferrières', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 63 (1902), pp. 69-118, no. 31, at pp. 73-75.
[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 96.

Bertrand in the amalgam/collection of many of his texts published as *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* in 1515.[1]

The reason we need to explore Bertrand's story in a little detail is because from the time of Marca through to Brugèles and after him many derivative historians including Bladé, and all the way up to Mussot-Goulard, his story has been taken as the main support or supposed evidence for an historical invasion of Northmen or '*Dani*' in Gascony starting in *c*.840, an eruption which thereafter led to the destruction of most Gascon episcopal and other towns.

For the part which concerns us at present, Bertrand's early sixteenth-century compilation of his work starts with the statement:

> Dux interea potentissimus extitit Vasconiæ nomine Totilus, qui super universam Vacceorum gentem, non exigue tempore strenuissime tenuit principatum. Anno autem sui ducatus 28. indictione 4. quinto nonas mayas sol eclipsim passus, mox futuras esse prænunciavit commotiones regnorum et dispersiones gentium.[2]

This means that at this time there was a most powerful Vascon called *Totilus* who was for a long time the prince of all the *Vaccaei* (Vascon) peoples.[3] In the 28 year of his *ducatus* in indiction 4 on the fifth of the *nones* of May there was a solar eclipse which presaged disturbances in the realm and the destruction/dispersal of people. The date here stated means 3 May 841, a point to which we shall return.

Bertrand then continues with a long story of the destruction of multiple 'Gascon' episcopal towns, starting with an initial arrival at Bordeaux.[4] Here I will just give the Gascon historian Jean-François Bladé's French *résumé* of Bertrand's long passage, for which he used the Latin transcription of Dom Brugèles:[5]

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[1] N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis ab urbe condita cunctis mortalibus apprime dignum conspectibus* (Toulouse, 1515). There are no page numbers in this work. I will use and reference hereafter the page numbers from the digitalised version available at: http://basededonnees.archives.toulouse.fr/4DCGI/Web_VoirLaNotice/11_01/RES343/ILUMP9999. See also V. Lamazou-Duplan, 'Lorsque la greffe prend… De la compilation à l'hybridation générique dans *l'Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* de Nicolas Bertrand [1515], in H. Charpentier and V. Fasseur (eds.), *Les genres au Moyen Âge : la question de l'hétérogénéité* (Vallongues, 2010), pp. 89-98.

[2] N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515) p. 30. See also L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, pp. 9-11.

[3] I will return to which time is being referred to here.

[4] N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30.

[5] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, pp. 9-11. Mussot-Goulard also only uses Brugèles's text; she was clearly aware of the original 1515 Latin text, and maybe even perhaps of the two subsequent French translations, but never used them.

Les Normands (*Dani*)[1] débarquèrent en grand nombre devant Bordeaux. Mais la ville était bien fortifiée. N'ayant pu s'en rendre maîtres, ces pirates pillèrent les environs, massacrèrent les habitants, et regagnèrent leurs navires chargés d'un énorme butin. Et comme le vent d'ouest (*zephirus*) soufflait, les pillards ne purent partir. C'est pourquoi ils s'en allèrent d'abord attaquer Bazas (*urbem Vasatensem*), dont ils massacrèrent les habitants et incendièrent l'église et les maisons. Vint ensuite le tour du château de Sos (*castrum Sotiae*), et de Lectoure dont les remparts n'étaient pas alors (*ea tempestate*) aussi fort, dont les habitants n'étaient pas aussi courageux que maintenant (*nunc*) où ils ont un bon seigneur et prince. Cela fait, les forbans se tournèrent contre Aquis (*Aquis*), aujourd'hui Cauterets (*quod nunc dicitur Cauterets*), jadis ville importante, aujourd'hui médiocre bourgade, et y détruisirent les thermes construits sous les empereurs romains. Les autres cités, Bayonne (*Lapurdis*), Oloron (*Oloronis*), Lescar (*Lacurris*) eurent le même sort. Alors les Vascons (*Vascones*), retirés dans les cavernes et les rochers des montagnes, en sortirent pour livrer bataille ; mais les Normands[2] en massacrèrent un grand nombre, et les survivants regagnèrent leurs retraites. Cela fait, les pirates s'emparèrent du château de Tarbes (*Tarbiense castrum*), et de la ville d'Orre (*Orensem urbem*), qui subirent le sort commun. Mais enfin, le duc Totilus réanimant le courage des siens, marcha contre les pillards, les mit en déroute, et les poursuivit pendant trois jours et trois nuits jusqu'à la Garonne. Le petit nombre de ceux qui échappèrent au massacre, regagnèrent leurs vaisseaux à la nage. Cette désolation de la Vasconie […] eut lieu du temps dudit prince Totilus (*praefati principis Totili*), de Taurin, évêque d'Auch (*Taurin Auxiensis*), et d'Hérald (*Heraldi*, sic), évêque de la ville de Bigorre (*episcopi Bigorritanae urbis*).[3]

It must already be emphasised that Brugèles's transcription of Bertrand's text was as Bladé quite rightly says 'parfois condensé'.[4] This is of the utmost importance because as will be discussed shortly one of the things Brugèles left out, whether deliberately or not, is a whole

[1] 'Northmen' are never mentioned in Bertrand's text. Brugèles (*ibid.*) has this as 'Dani magnis classibus [...]', but N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30, actually wrote that some barbarians came in 'magnis classibus' from the 'mare oceanus', and referred to these earlier as being a *gens* called the *Daphnica*. Brugèles continually 'translated' or transcribed Bertrand's similar expressions as '*Dani*', which Bladé then renders in French as *Normands*. This point is discussed much more below.
[2] See the previous note.
[3] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), pp. 486-88. Bladé's résumé, no doubt because it really is just a résumé, misses out several very interesting points contained in Bertrand's Latin text as transcibed by Brugèles. I will not explore these more here.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 487, note.

long passage in Bertrand's text concerning who those supposedly responsible for all this devastation in Gascony actually were; they were in fact never said to have been '*Dani*'.

But what were Bertrand's sources for this story? Brugèles said that Bertrand had *tiré* his story from a 'Charte de Bigorre ou Tarbes',[1] and then subsequently just calls it the 'Charte de Bigorre'. Mussot-Goulard follows Brugèles in saying that Bertrand utilised a text 'provenant d'un "cartulaire de Bigorre"', and that: 'Cette chronique a été composé à partir du cartulaire perdu de Tarbes, selon son auteur.'[2] She continually refers to this text as being from a 'cartulaire de Bigorre', and even on one occasion calls it rather creatively 'La charte de Totilon'.[3] Regarding the question of Bertrand's sources for this story, F. Boutoulle has quite rightly pointed out that: 'Ni dans cet extrait ni dans son prologue N. Bertrand ne les évoque, pas même un hypothétique cartulaire de Tarbes auquel renvoie pourtant R. Mussot-Goulard', and that the actual *Cartulaire de Bigorre* contains nothing of this sort.[4] He concludes quite moderately: 'Tout cela ne peut que nous rendre circonspects face aux faits rapportés par N. Bertrand.'[5] Having trawled through Bertrand's 1515 Latin text I can confirm that Boutoulle's statement regarding the hypothetical 'charter' of Tarbes/Bigorre is completely correct. The whole idea of a 'Charte de Bigorre ou Tarbes' seems to be just an invention or imagination of Dom Brugèles.[6]

With regard to this part of Bertrand's text J.-F. Bladé said: 'Il faut vraiment n'avoir pris la peine de le lire attentivement pour l'accepter comme une source contemporaine.'[7] Ferdinand Lot was also very scathing about Bertrand's story. In 1950 he wrote regarding Bertrand's text: 'Nous sommes en présence d'une imposture de Nicolas Bertrandi (mort en 1527), qui est un

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[1] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 50, and proofs of part 1, p. 11. He gives no reference or citation for this assertion. Note also that Pierre de Marca (who had certainly closely read Bertrand's 1515 Latin text) never mentions a supposed 'charte de Bigorre' or similar as being either 'a' or 'the' source for these events as described by Bertrand.

[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 39, p. 97, n. 26, also p. 89, n. 161.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 39.

[4] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 36. Although J.-F. Le Nail, O. Schaad, C. Servelle, 'La cité de Tarbes et le castrum Bigorra-Saint-Lézer', in L. Maurin and J.-M. Pailler (eds.), *La Civilisation urbaine de l'Antiquité tardive dans le Sud-Ouest de la Gaule*, *Actes du IIIe Colloque Aquitania et des XVIe Journées d'Archéologie Mérovingienne, Toulouse 23-24 juin 1995*, *Aquitania* XIV (Toulouse, 1996), pp. 73-104, at p. 104, say that Bertrand 'déclare d'ailleurs les [precise information about Saint-Lézer in Bigorre] avoir recueillies à l'évêché de Tarbes, *in sede Bigorritana*'. Unfortunately, no reference for this is given and I have yet to find it in Bertrand's text. For the extant and recently edited *Cartulary of Bigorre* see *Le Cartulaire de Bigorre (XIe-XIIIe siècle)*, eds. X. Ravier and B. Cursente (Paris, 2005).

[5] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 36.

[6] It is interesting that P. de Marca who had certainly read Bertrand's *Opus* in detail never mentions that Bertrand says this story came from any cartulary/charter of Bigorre/Tarbes. In fact, he only says that Bertrand had 'l'a puisée de quelque ancient manuscrit' (cf. *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 191). Earlier (*ibid*., p. 35), when mentioning the ruin of the twelve cities of the *Novempopulanie* (as given in the *Charte de Lescar*), he says that the information given in 'la vieille Chartre de Gascogne alleguéé par Nicolas Bertrand en l'histoire de Tolose' conforms to what is found in the *Charte de Lescar*. But this seems to be only Marca's assumption that Bertrand had taken the story from some old 'Chartre de Gascogne', because as noted Bertrand gives no such attribution.

[7] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 485.

mystificateur, et la simple lecture de ses élucubrations prétendues historiques aurait dû en avertir,'[1] adding that: 'Je ne pense pas qu'aucun érudit de Gascogne se fasse aujourd'hui d'illusion sur son *De Tolosanorum gestis*.'[2] I agree entirely. Yet just three decades years later Mussot-Goulard did exactly this. Mussot-Goulard made a *cri du cœur* that various of Lot's statements contain 'aucune trace d'argumentation critique au sujet de chartes' (including Bertrand's supposed/imagined *charte de Bigorre*) and that 'les accusations de F. Lot sont globales, non argumentées et, de ce fait, n'offrent pas de matière à discussion'.[3] But in fact all of Lot's observations which she references - but only in snippets or selected words - actually come from his *Études sur le règne de Hugues Capet* and they all concern the tenth century and do not at all refer to events in the mid-ninth century, as supposedly described by Nicolas Bertrand. Yet even from the most cursory reading of Bertrand's text it is abundantly clear the words are his own, borrowing though he undoubtedly was from various obscure and completely unnamed earlier sources and traditions.

However, taking on board Mussot-Goulard's complaint about Lot, I hope that what I start to examine in this chapter is, even if only partially, an 'argumentation critique au sujet de chartes', and may perhaps offer some initial 'material for discussion'.

Following Brugèles's and Marca's lead,[4] Mussot-Goulard places enormous trust in Bertrand's story in her own work; but even so she still says that 'on constate que le récit repose sur quelques renseignements que l'auteur peut avoir relevé dans les chartes', and that 'ces points fermes, avec noms, dates, encadrent généralement le récit, qui, lui, fait plus de part à l'imagination', which except for the point about Bertrand's imagination is not really true regarding dates because none are explicitly given, and the only name mentioned is that of the mysterious *Totilus*. Then, after saying that Bertrand's story about the supposed (later?) wars between the *Toulousains* and the *Bayonnais* is 'rempli de fantaisie', she continues by saying that Bertrand's passage concerning 'les invasions normandes en Gascogne obéit a cette construction' - so of fantasy and imagination I presume.[5] It must be said that this is not really a very glowing endorsement of the passage written by Bertrand in the early sixteenth century, which was supposedly, according to her and following Brugèles, borrowing from something Bertrand had found in a now lost Bigorre/Tarbes cartulary. Nevertheless, it is this text of Nicolas

[1] F. Lot, 'L'énigme de « Cieutat »', *Revue des Études Anciennes*, 52 (1950), pp. 300-305, at p. 301.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 301, n. 5.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 13, referencing F. Lot, *Études sur le règne de Hugues Capet*, p. 205, n. 2, p. 207, nn. 2 and 3.
[4] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 191, simply assumes that Bertrand's story concerns the '*Normans*'.
[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 39.

Bertrand far more than any other that Mussot-Goulard relies upon to construct her whole story of the Northmen in Gascony in the ninth century.

J.-F. Bladé is much more explicit and damning. He argued that Bertrand's text was his own construction and a pastiche, and he gave many of the compelling reasons which led him to this conclusion which I will not repeat here.[1] Later Bladé concludes that 'le récit de Bertrandi [*sic*] n'est qu'un tissu de mensonges'.[2] Bladé's general critique is rather convincing although in my opinion he could have gone further.[3]

But let us now return to the year 840. Following Marca and Brugèles once again, Mussot-Goulard makes much of Nicolas Bertrand's mention of a solar eclipse. There was indeed a solar eclipse in 840 which happened on Wednesday 5 May. It was noted by Prudentius in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*,[4] in the Astronomer's *Life of the Emperor Louis*,[5] in the *Annals of Xanten*,[6] by Andrew of Bergamo in his *Historia*,[7] in the *Annals of Angoulême*,[8] as well as in several other short annals. Bertrand, and not the scribe of the hypothetical lost charter it is claimed by Dom Brugèles that he was using, could certainly have taken his report of the eclipse from one or other of these earlier chronicles and annals (although assigning it to a quite wrong date), which all presage momentous events such as Louis the Pious's death a little later in 840 and the arrival of the Northmen on the Seine and the battle of Fontenoy - both in 841.

In Bertrand's story the solar eclipse is dated to the 28th year of the reign of Totilus, to which I will return, and to 'indictione 4, quinto nonas mayas', which as touched on briefly above strictly speaking means 3 May 841, not 840 or 5 May the real date of 'a' solar eclipse. Second, just as with the other contemporary or near contemporary annals and chronicles mentioning it this eclipse is a portent of calamitous events. Here these are the arrival of Northmen at Bordeaux

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[1] See J.-F. Bladé, 'Influence des métropolitains d'Eauze et des archevêques d'Auch en Navarre et en Aragon, depuis la conquête de l'Espagne par les musulmans jusqu'à la fin du onzième siècle', *Annales du Midi. Revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 8. 32 (1896), pp. 385-405; *idem*, J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), pp. 484-85, 488-91.

[2] J. -F. Bladé, *L'Évêché des Gascons* (Paris, 1899), p. 7.

[3] Bladé occasionally gets a little exasperated regarding Bertrand's text, for example when he says ('Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 488): 'Il serait par trop fastidieux de réfuter toutes les erreurs qu'il contient.' On the other hand, many of Bladé's own numerous statements about the activities of the Northmen in Aquitaine and Gascony, and their dates, are equally garbled, self-contradictory, unsupported and ultimately as wrong as those of Marca, Brugèles, Mussot-Goulard and others.

[4] *AB* 840, ed. Grat, p. 36: 'Eclipsis solis III nonas maii ante nonam diei horam multis in locis a plurimis uisa est.'

[5] *Die Taten Kaiser Ludwigs. Astronomus. Das Leben Kaiser Lud*wigs, ed. E. Tremp, *MGH*, *SRG*, 64, p. 544 : 'Solis contigit tertia die letanie maioris […].' For more on the Astronomer's report see *ibid*., p. 545, n. 962.

[6] *AX* 840, ed. von Simson, p. 11: 'Anno DCCCXL […] Et tercia [nones] Maii, id est tercia die rogationum, hora nona eclipsis solis facta est, et stellae manifestae sunt visae in caelo velut noctis tempore.'

[7] Andrew of Bergamo: *Historia*, ed. L. Bethmann and G. Waitz, *MGH*, *SS rerum Langobardorum et Italicarum*, VI-IX (Hanover, 1878), p. 226: 'Indictione tertia sic fuit sol obscuratus in hoc mundo, et stellas in celo apparebant, 3. Nonas Magias, ora nona, in laetanias Domini, quasi media ora.' Also found in *Testi storici e poetici dell'Italia carolingia*, ed. L. A. Berto (Padua, 2002).

[8] *AAng s.a.* 840, p. 486.

and the surrounding area, events which Bertrand's text introduces by the expression '*Eo tempore*', which I suggest here means, as quite often elsewhere, 'in this period' or 'in this époque'. This and similar expressions were often used as a filler where the author had no real idea where exactly to place the events he is describing, and it is not specifically a reference to the year 840, or even 841 if 'indictione 4' is to be believed.

That Bertrand's text has 'indictione 4' as the time when the Northmen started their devastations is of some interest. Only Andrew of Bergamo gives an indiction for the solar eclipse and quite correctly as 'Indictione tertia' that is 840, and, as just mentioned, the month of May in *indictione 4* (the fourth year of the Indiction) can only be 841 if we are really concerned with an event in the mid-ninth century. Is it just a coincidence that the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* starts its report of the arrival of Northmen on the Seine in 841 with: 'ANNO DOMINICAE INCARNATIONIS D CCC XLI°, indictione IIII, IIII° idus maii, uenerunt Nortmanni, Oscheri quoque dux', 'In the year of the Lord's Incarnation 841, the fourth Indiction, the Northmen appeared on 12 May, led by Oskar', and then goes on to describe a major incursion by the Northmen into Francia, starting, just like Bertrand, in the fourth Indiction and in May no less.[1] One may doubt it. In a similar fashion this *Chronicle* when describing what Oskar's Northmen were doing during the 840s, between their two appearances on the Seine in 841 and 851/52, says that they 'had occupied many regions and plundered them, including the heavily fortified city of Bordeaux, capital of the region of *Novempopulania*, from which he had then advanced'.[2] The monk of Fontenelle also mentions that Bordeaux was a 'heavily fortified city', 'urbem Burdegalim, munitissimam',[3] which it was, and which was why it was only after a long siege that it was taken in early 848. As far as I am aware this is the only time in the whole of the ninth century where a city was ever specifically said to have been 'heavily fortified', but Bertrand also has Bordeaux as being 'well-fortified': 'Ad oppidum [Bordeaux] vero memoratum cum pervenissent, et ipsum expugnare propter munitionem illus tutissimam nullatenus quivissent [...].'[4]

Bertrand's text also displays some parallels with the way that Prudentius in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* reports the siege and capture of Bordeaux in 847-48: 'Danes attacked and plundered the coastal regions of Aquitaine. They laid siege to the town of Bordeaux for a long time', but while this was going on 'Charles attacked the [actually 'a'] contingent of the Northmen who were

[1] *ChrFont* 841: ed. Laporte, p. 75; trans. Coupland.
[2] *ChrFont* 851: ed. Laporte, p. 87; trans. Coupland.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30; J.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 9; J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 23 (1896), p. 486.

besieging Bordeaux and manfully defeated them', and then having taken the *civitas* these 'Danes' 'ravaged and burned it', before it goes on to tell of the wasting and burning of other places in the area, particularly the *vicus* of Melle a little later in 848, and then the city of Périgueux in the spring of 849.[1] This does rather remind us of Nicolas Bertrand's statement that after failing (here) to capture Bordeaux, and to use Bladé's words, 'ces pirates pillèrent les environs, massacrèrent les habitants', or, in the original Latin, 'cuncta vastando quae in circuitu errant, omnem creaturam in qua vitalis calor esse poterat'.[2] It is also worthy of note that Bertrand in finishing this part of his story says that after devastating the environs of Bordeaux, the 'Dani' [*sic*] regained the sea loaded with booty, 'sicque ingressi sunt mare cum ingenti spolio', which should be compared with Prudentius's comment that after pillaging and burning 'the city Périgueux in Aquitaine' in 849 the Northmen returned 'unscathed to their ships',[3] but even more pertinently to the Fontenelle annalist's comment that when the Northmen left the Seine in 852 they 'went back to Bordeaux on laden ships', 'sicque onustis nauibus ad Burdegaliam reuersi sunt',[4] or as Laporte translates this, 'ayant rempli leurs navires de butin, revinrent à Bordeaux',[5] where a link is made with Bordeaux.

There are also some interesting concordances with the *Chronicle of Nantes* which was compiled according to René Merlet in the mid-eleventh century. Bertrand's text has the barbarian *gens Daphnica* (transcribed by Brugèles as 'Dani') first coming to Bordeaux from the *mare oceanum* but later returning to the sea, but because a West Wind (*zephirus*) was blowing they could not depart, and because of this they were blown up the Garonne and they went first to attack more southerly Bazas where, of course, they massacred the inhabitants and burned the church and buildings.[6] Whereas in the *Chronicle of Nantes* we also find the *Normannos ferox natio*[7] coming from the *Oceanum* or *mare Oceanum*,[8] it was a West Wind (*zephirus*) that brought them to Nantes in 843 ('Deinde, dato classibus zephiro, ad urbem Namneticam'),[9] and after the sack of the city they eventually reboarded their ships loaded with booty but were not able to go back to their own

[1] *AB* 847-849: trans. Nelson, pp. 64, 65, 66, 68.
[2] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 23 (1896), p. 486. And compare J.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 9; N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30.
[3] *AB* 849: trans. Nelson, p. 68.
[4] *ChrFont*: ed. Laporte, p. 89; trans. Coupland.
[5] *Ibid*., ed. Laporte, p. 88.
[6] N. Bertrand, *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30; J.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 9; J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 486 and p. 484, n. 1.
[7] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 6, p. 15.
[8] *Ibid*., chap. 6, p. 15; chap. 5, p. 12.
[9] *Ibid*., chap. 6, p. 15. Note that this is in Chapter 6 which is probably a ninth-century eyewitness account.

region because of a violent wind which blew them to Galicia, from where they later returned with the aid of a West Wind (*zephirus*) to Bordeaux [this was in 845], and from there of course they made many raids in the region in the following years, as discussed in Chapter 3.[1]

In connection with the length of the reign of *Totilus*, in Bertrand's text Mussot-Goulard undertakes some contortions and circular arguments to bolster her date of 840 for the arrival of the Northmen in Gascony.

Firstly, she arbitrarily changes the 28th year of Totilus to his 23rd year.[2] This appears to be because she assumed that Siguin I, a *dux* of the Gascons,[3] had been removed in 817: 'un autre duc fut nommé en 817, Totilon, qui garda le *ducatus* jusqu'en 840.'[4] But Mussot-Goulard bases this date of Siguin's removal and replacement by 'Totilon' on the Astronomer's *Life of the Emperor Louis* which she maintains places Siguin's removal in that year.[5] In fact it does not, it gives no date. The Astronomer actually borrowed here, as he did elsewhere, from the *Royal Frankish Annals*, which clearly tell us that Siguin had been removed by 816.[6] Mussot-Goulard was well aware of the date of 816,[7] but she believed that 'Totilon' was appointed to replace Siguin by Pippin I who we know was appointed king of Aquitaine in 817 by his father Louis the Pious. Thus, having already convinced herself that the Northmen had arrived in 840, the real date of the/a solar eclipse, she has to change Bertrand's text to read the 23rd year of 'Totilon' and not the 28th, because 840 minus 817 gives 23. As she says later, 'Ces attaques [of the Northmen into Gascony] auraient commencé, selon le scribe [of the 'charte bigourdain' of course], la vingt-huitième année (vingt-troisième) du *ducatus* de Totilon, indiction 4, le cinqième jour des nones de mai', adding that 'avec les annales, il faut donc accepter la date de 840' for these attacks.[8]

We have here a very clear example of Mussot-Goulard's circular and teleological reasoning. 'Totilon's' 28th year has already been changed to his 23rd year to give us a date of 817 for his appointment, but even so in writing this sentence she takes no account of the fact that May in indiction 4 means 841 and not 840. In fact, she actually assumes that indiction 4 means 840.[9]

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[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 7, p. 20.
[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91 and n. 174. Elsewhere (*ibid*., p. 87, n. 145), she even says regarding the *duc Totilon* of Bertrand's text that this is 'indiquant un événement la 23e année du *ducatus* de Totilon (840)'; note the '840' once again.
[3] In the sources he is sometimes called *dux* and sometimes count.
[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 86.
[5] *Ibid*., p. 86 and n. 143.
[6] *RFA s.a.* 816: trans. Scholz, p. 100.
[7] Cf. R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 86 and n. 137.
[8] *Ibid*., p. 91.
[9] In a footnote R. Mussot-Goulard (*ibid*., p. 91, n. 175) refers to the fact that all the annals place the solar eclipse in 840 and she then says: 'Il faut donc rectifier le chiffre 23e année du *ducatus* et le 3 des nones de mai.' I think I

One final thought may be relevant here. When the emperor Louis the Pious died on 20 June 840 - note just weeks after the historical solar eclipse - he had held the imperial title for over twenty-seven years if we count from his coronation as joint-emperor at Aachen in early 813; hence he was in the twenty-eighth year of his reign when he died.[1] Indeed, and more relevant regarding Bertrand's much later compilation, the Astronomer's *Life of the Emperor Louis*, which had mentioned the solar eclipse in May, soon tells of Louis's death in June and says that Louis had been 'emperor for twenty-seven years',[2] whilst Nithard, who on occasion borrowed from the Astronomer, in his *Histories* says that Louis had been emperor for 'twenty-seven years and six months' which seems to be based on the *Royal Frankish Annals* which place his coronation at Aachen sometime around the beginning of 813.[3] Now it is certainly true that Bertrand was a 'un mystificateur' and a 'véritable amplificateur' who wanted to glorify his region and its history.[4] What he may have done for his mystical Totilus and his longevity, and the year of the solar eclipse (840) supposedly being in Totilus's twenty-eighth year, is borrow from the illustrious reign of over twenty-seven years of the Carolingian Louis the Pious - as found in ninth-century texts which Bertrand could certainly have seen - a reign which ended in June 840 just weeks after the solar eclipse Bertrand seems to start his story with. This is just a thought because we can never really hope to fully recover Bertrand's method of composition and his deductions.[5]

Was there a Gascon leader called Totilus who defeated the Northmen?

We now need to examine in a little more depth another piece of pseudo-history that Bertrand inserted into his story: the case of Totilus.

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know what she means here but even so as a non-native speaker of French it seems a little badly formulated? Then she adds: 'C'est bien la 4e année de l'indiction 35', whereas in fact 840 was the third year of the indiction. P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 191, discusses the 'falsity' of Bertrand's date for the solar eclipse, the garbled information regarding Totilus (which will be discussed more immediately below) and concludes, 'on ne peut pas faire fondement, sur ce qu'il escrit de l'année 28. du Gouuernement de Totilus'.

[1] The *Royal Frankish Annnals* place Louis's coronation at Aachen in early 813; see *RFA s.a.* 813, trans. Scholz, p. 95. The later *Chronicle of Moissac* (*Chronicon Moissiacense*) dates this coronation to September 813: *Chronicon Moissacense*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 1 (Hanover, 1826), no. 813, p. 310. For the complicated history, manuscripts, texts and translations of the *Chronicle of Moissac* see in the first instance: D. Calzen, *Chronicon Moissiacense Maius. A Carolingian world chronicle from Creation until the first years of Louis the Pious. On the basis of the manuscript of the late Ir. J.M.J.G Kats, prepared and revised by D. Claszen*, unpublished Master's dissertation (Leiden University, 2012); R. de La Haye, *Chronique des abbés de Moissac* (Moissac, 1994).

[2] Astronomer, *Life of the Emperor Louis*: trans. Noble, p. 302.

[3] Nithard, *Histories*, trans. Scholz, book I, p. 140. Scholz's statement (*ibid*., n. 39, p. 204) that Louis had actually been emperor for 'twenty-six years and nine months' is obviously based on a belief in the September 813 date given in the *Chronicle of Moissac*.

[4] See F. Lot, 'L'énigme de « Cieutat »', p. 301; J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 484.

[5] For which see to start with V. Lamazou-Duplan, 'Lorsque la greffe prend', pp. 89-98.

From what we know of the history of Gascony in the first half of the ninth century, which is admittedly not too much, there is no place to situate a *duc* called Totilus who apparently ruled the region for about three decades and who towards the end of his reign was confronted with a major Scandinavian invasion and destruction of his realm which forced him and the Gascons to abandon the towns and hide out in caves and mountains before suddenly appearing again to inflict a major defeat on the Northmen on the Garonne which chased them from Gascony.[1]

This does not prevent Mussot-Goulard from twisting and turning to try to place him into her story of the Northmen in Gascony in the ninth century. As was mentioned earlier, this was done by starting with her already assumed date of 840 for the Northmen's arrival in the region and then having to amend the 28th year of his reign to the 23rd so as to get back to 817. Yet after saying that 'Totilon n'est connu par aucune autre texte' (which is not quite true as is discussed below), she adds, 'mais il peut avoir sa place comme duc des Gascons entre Seguin II (816) et Seguin III (845). Il aurait péri dans les combats en 844'.[2]

Marca, after highlighting the problems with dating the advent of the Northmen in Gascony to 840, the year of the solar eclipse, and saying that from Bertrand's manuscript 'on ne peut faire fondement, sur ce qu'il a escrit de l'année 28. du Gouuernement de Totilus',[3] which seems to be a convenient way of disposing of the claimed longevity of his rule over the Gascons, then proceeds to accept not only Totilus's existence but his pivotal role in confronting the Northmen and eventually his chasing them out of Gascony. He writes: 'En tout cas cette narration [of Bertrand] asseure que les Normans apres avoir manqué leur entreprise sur Bourdeaux, ruinerent les Cités de Gascogne', which are then listed once again, and that 'Totilus après auoir esté batu en deux cóbats [*sic*, = combats], les défit, & les chassa entierement de Gascogne'.[4] This is all nonsense and we will not pursue it further here except to say that in the ninth century there is no evidence that at any time the Northmen were heavily defeated and then chased entirely out of any region in France, and certainly not from Aquitaine or Gascony.

But there is another mention of a Totilus in the notorious forgery (probably of the mid-seventeenth century) generally called the *Charter of Alaon* which purports to have been written for Charles the Bald in 845, but which Joseph-François Rabanis most thoroughly analysed and demolished in 1856.[5]

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[1] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), pp. 488-91.
[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 39.
[3] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 191.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 191-92. It is quite impossible to tell in Marca's work in which precise years he wants to place this ruin of the cities of Gascony, but seemingly in his story this happened sometime between 841 and 851.
[5] J.-F. Rabanis, *Les Mérovingiens d'Aquitaine : essai historique et critique sur la charte d'Alaon* (Paris, 1856), hereafter *Critique sur la charte d'Alaon*.

The Alaon forgery says that after the exile of Lupus Centulle[1] other lords, who were 'issues of our blood' (supposedly and wrongly Charles the Bald's) were given the 'duchy' of Gascony. First there was Totilus and following him Sigihini-Mostellanicus,[2] who still possessed it ('Nam Vasconiae ducamen Totilo duci primo dedit, et post eum Sigihino Mostellanico, qui illud nunc habe'); hence in the invented year of the charter: 845.[3] It would take us too far from the concerns of this work to explore this fabulous and very late concoction further. Rabanis did this admirably in 1856 and dates the compilation of the whole forgery to the seventeenth century.[4] Indeed he argued very convincingly that it was probably concocted by the notorious mid-seventeenth century Spanish forger and writer of historical 'fables' Juan Tamayo de Salazar (1602-1661).[5]

But there must have been a connection between these two mentions of a 'Totilus'. It is of interest that in the Alaon forgery the only mention of the Northmen comes just after the naming of Totilus and it refers to the monastery of Sainte-Marie on the Île de Ré (dep. Vendée) having been destroyed by them and that it had not been restored since.[6] Now the Alaon Charter forger has to force everything into a period before his invented date of 845, and sometimes he glaringly fails. There may have been a Scandinavian attack on the Île de Ré at some point but this is not why this particular island is mentioned here; it has a much bigger role to play in the forgery. Nevertheless, in both cases, in the *Charter of Alaon* and in Bertrand's text, the mentions of Totilus as a supposed *dux* of the Gascons come cheek by jowl with an arrival of Northmen, although one is in the Vendée and the other 'before Bordeaux' a little further down the Aquitanian coast.

From an historical rather than legendary point of view, it is possible that the Northmen who had sacked Nantes in 843 had raided the Île de Ré afterwards on their way to Toulouse, which

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 220. For the obscure (probably) Gascon 'Lupus Centulle' see in the first instance A. R. Lewis, *The Development of Southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, 1965), p. 43; R. Collins, *The Basques*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1990), p. 129; R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 88 and nn. 149, 150. See also *RFA s.a.* 819, trans Scholz, p. 105: 'Lupus Centulli the Basque [*sic* = *Wasco*] was sent into exil for life [...]'; Astronomer, *The Life of Emperor Louis*, trans. Noble, chap. 31, p. 259: 'At the same time, a certain Basque named Lupus, son of Centulus, rose up in rebellion [...] and [was] condemned to exile.' There is much more that could be said about this Gascon Lupus son of Centulus but it is far outside the scope of the present work.

[2] Sigihini-Mostellanicus means the Seguin who died fighting the Northmen in 845. For a most illuminating discussion of the 'surname' Mostellanicus see J.-F. Rabanis, *Critique sur la charte d'Alaon*, pp. 142-53.

[3] *Ibid*., pp. 141, 220.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 207: 'La charte d'Alaon n'a pu être fabriquée au moyen âge, alors que les documents sur lesquels elle s'appuie, chroniques, légendes, martyrologes, étaient encore disséminés dans les bibliothèques des monastères. Aussi je maintiens qu'elle n'a été rédigée qu'après la publication de ces documents, et qu'elle ne peut être antérieure au commencement du dix-septième siècle.'

[5] *Ibid*., pp. 203-8. For Juan Tamayo de Salazar see J. M. Cossío, *Fábulas mitológicas en España* (Madrid, 1998); J. Godoy Alcantara, *Historia crítica de los falsos cronicones* (Madrid, 1981).

[6] J.-F. Rabanis, *Critique sur la charte d'Alaon*, p. 220.

they only reached in 844, and they would have had to pass Bordeaux (which they did not attempt to take at this time) on their way there; and in fact it is in 843 that the Bordeaux archaeologist Jean Chapelot believes that the 'certain island' mentioned in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* was the Île de Ré and that the abbey there was destroyed by the Northmen when they arrived in 843 after leaving Nantes, although this is mere speculation.[1] Alternatively, Bertrand's story of an unsuccessful attack on Bordeaux followed by widespread raiding in 'Gascony', if it has any historical foundation to it at all, may be mirroring or even borrowing from the report in Prudentius's *Annals of Saint-Bertin* that in 855 'the Northmen attacked Bordeaux a *civitas* in Aquitaine' (note that it is not said the city was taken), 'and moved around all over the countryside at will'.[2] Strictly speaking both the city of Bordeaux and much of the Bordelais were and still are in 'Gascony' and at this time Bordeaux was, it is generally believed, from where the *dux* of the Gascons or *dux* of the March of Gascony ruled.

As Rabanis has shown the *Charter of Alaon* was undoubtedly concocted sometime in the mid-seventeenth century, quite probably, and as already noted, by Juan Tamayo de Salazar who was publishing his creations between 1646 and 1659, which leads us to the possibility that the name Totilus found in it was just taken by the forger from Bertrand's already published *Opus*, or it is even possible that he took it from Pierre de Marca's own book published in 1640. On the other hand, it is also highly unlikely that the Alaon forger got the name Totilus from Brugèles's and Mussot-Goulard's hypothetical charter of Bigorre/Tarbes because there is no evidence that such a 'charter' containing such a story existed.

But as will be shown later in this chapter a *Totilus*, named as a king, also appears in a text from Saint-Orens of Auch which was also written in the seventeenth century, at least according to Dom Brugèles who 'copied' some of it. Thus, all three mentions of this mysterious Totilus come from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Finally, what of the name Totilus? The name does not seem in any way to be Gascon or even Frankish, at least as far as we can tell. If Totilus had been a *dux* of the Gascons for about thirty years or so then surely the name might be expected to reappear later on in the region - but it does not. Most historians who have considered the matter doubt Totilus's very existence, as do I, and sometimes remove all reference to him.[3] However Rabanis says:

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[1] J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg', p. 182.
[2] *AB* 855: ed. Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80.
[3] J.-F. Rabanis, *Critique sur la charte d'Alaon*, p. 141: 'Si la charte n'existait pas, personne n'eût songé à ramasser dans la légende de Bertrandi le nom de Totilus, tellement les faits auxquels il est mêlé sont bizarres et incroyables.'

> Si l'on voulait absolument former une conjecture sur le nom et les actes de ce prétendu duc de Vasconie, on en trouverait peut-être le type dans le célèbre évêque de Limoges, STODILUS, qui occupa ce siége de 840 à 860, et joua un rôle important dans l'Aquitaine pendant le règne de Charles le Chauve. Visité plus d'une fois par les Normands, Stodilus, qui n'était pas moins brave que pieux, donna à son troupeau l'exemple du courage et de la résistance, et il fit reculer les barbares.[1]

Putting to one side the false statements that Bishop Stodilus, whether or not he was at least as brave as pious, had been visited more than once by the Northmen and that he and his *troupeau* had made them withdraw, I think perhaps Rabanis is grasping at straws here, based solely on a slight similarity of names. And this despite him referring to Bertrand's 'ancienne chronique de Toulouse' as 'la légende la plus grotesque et la plus fabuleuse du moyen âge', and full of 'puérilités'.[2] Bladé picked up on Rabanis's bold (*téméraire*) suggestion and gives a good (though debatable) overview of what we know of Stodilus from '840 to 860',[3] but whilst he is very tempted by the idea Bladé comes to the conclusion that: 'Je ne suis pas bien certain que Bertrandi ait pris, en le modifant un peu, le nom de ce personnage, pour en faire le personnage apocryphe de Totilus, duc des Vascons.'[4] I too would rather doubt it.

Once we acknowledge that Bertrand's story is an historical *bricolage*, my word, or according to Bladé a *récit fabuleux*, and he himself was full of *imagination* and a *véritable amplificateur*,[5] or as Lot says *un mystificateur*,[6] and that all his stories, or at least those here, are not real history, then we might look for a name Totilus anywhere.

The only person I am aware of with the same name is the Goth *Totilas* who in the mid-sixth century was the penultimate king of the Ostrogoths in Italy, ruling from 541 to 552.[7]

It needs to be emphasised that without any exception historians, starting with Marca, have all assumed that Bertrand's mention of a solar eclipse presaging great troubles and destruction is referring to the real historical eclipse of May 840, even though Bertrand gives a completely wrong date. But this is just an unstated (and possibly tendentious) guess or assumption. Yet

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 143.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 142.
[3] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 491. Bladé says that 'entre ces deux dates, les Normands pénétrèrent dans la Limousin'. This is incorrect. The only time when we can be sure that the Northmen were raiding in the Limousin, which might or might not have included an attack on Limoges itself, was in late 863 or early 864, for which see Chapter 6, and by this time Stodilus was no longer bishop of Limoges.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 484, 489.
[6] F. Lot, 'L'énigme de « Cieutat »', p. 301.
[7] For the Ostrogoth Totilas see H. Wolfram, *The History of the Goths*, trans. T. J. Dunlap (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1988), pp. 353- 61.

early in the year 536, actually in the fourteenth and final year of the Indiction, there was a catastrophic natural event, a volcanic eruption in Iceland, which the Byzantine historian of the 6th century Procopius of Caesarea described as follows:

> And it came about during this year that a most dread portent took place. For the sun gave forth its light without brightness, like the moon, during this whole year, and it seemed exceedingly like the sun in eclipse, for the beams it shed were not clear nor such as it is accustomed to shed. And from the time when this thing happened men were free neither from war nor pestilence nor any other thing leading to death. And it was the time when Justinian was in the tenth year of his reign (536/37).[1]

This I suggest is rather reminiscent of Bertrand's text saying that 'mox futuras esse prænunciavit commotiones regnorum et dispersiones gentium'. This solar-eclipse-like event of 536 and its subsequent disastrous consequences (famine and war) is also extensively mentioned in many other contemporary and later histories including that of the contemporary Cassiodorus, and its effects were even remarked upon in two Irish annals.[2] This all may be just coincidental, but Procopius then goes on to describe all the wars and destructions in Italy involving the Ostrogothic rulers of Italy and the Byzantines which culminated in 541 in the election to the kingship of an Ostrogoth called 'Totilas', who incidentally was a relative of Theudis, the sword-bearer of Theodoric the Great and then king of the Visigoths. Over the next decade Totilas constantly fought the Byzantines until his death in 552.[3] The whole complex nexus regarding from where Nicolas Bertrand might have borrowed various elements of his historical *bricolage* involving Totilus *etcetera* begs more study, including whether Bertrand had any knowledge of Procopius's 'Greek' histories of the Vandal and Gothic wars. I want to stress that this is only an idea, although it is perhaps worthy of further investigation.

J.-F. Le Nail, D. Schaad and C. Servelle quite rightly say, 'le témoignage de Bertrand mériterait d'être étudié globalement, dans le cadre de l'ensemble du *De Tolosanorum gestis* la connaissance des sources de l'auteur, de sa conception de l'histoire et de ses procédés littéraires permettrait de mieux apprécier le sens et la valeur d'informations non vérifiables parmi d'autres

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[1] This is cited with references in A. Arjava, 'The Mystery Cloud of 536 CE in the Mediterranean Sources', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 59 (2005), pp. 73-94, at p. 79.
[2] For all this see in the first instance A. Arjava (*ibid.*).
[3] See for example H. Wolfram, *The History of the Goths*, pp. 353- 61. It may be of interest that the only later annals reporting Totilas's death are the *Annals of Fleury* under the date 556: *Annales Floriacenses*, A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire et les miracles de saint Benoît* (Paris, 1965), 'Appendice III', pp. 217-20, at p. 217: 'DLVI. Totila moritur.'

dont Marca notait déjà la fausseté'.[1] But even regarding just the first few lines of his text as just discussed (regarding the solar eclipse and Totilus), are not the concordances mentioned perhaps a few coincidences too far? Furthermore, as is explored immediately below there remains quite a lot of doubt surrounding the question of whether Bertrand in his story of Totilus etc. was really trying to tell something about the 'Dani' or Northmen in the mid-ninth century.

Was Bertrand really talking of Danes?

Every historian who has ever examined the case, even if only perfunctorily, has blithely assumed that Nicolas Bertrand was telling a story about Danes (*Dani*) in Aquitaine and Gascony in the 840s, or in Marca's early case, as he calls them, *Normans*.

But let us pause a little here because Bertrand never actually says *Dani* anywhere. He writes of those involved being the '*gens daphnica*' or the '*Daphni*', who were so named after their first king *Daphnicus/Daphnus*.[2] It is only later historians starting with and invariably borrowing from Dom Brugèles in the late eighteenth century who, usually without mentioning it, just transform these *gens daphnica/Daphni* into *Dani*. This might seem a reasonable assumption given that Bertrand starts his story was a reference to a solar eclipse, one of which, although he completely misdates it, happened in May 840, and there was indeed a Scandinavian attack on Bordeaux in the 840s, although in 847-48 and not in 840, and which actually succeeded in capturing the city after a long siege.[3].

Immediately after mentioning Totilus, the solar eclipse and that 'Eo tempore Vasconiae rura conculcata, atque exterminata fuereunt', and before mentioning the arrival of any barbarians at Bordeaux, Bertrand says he will provide the reasons for the truth of this in what follows,[4] 'par raisons nous verrons consequemment'.[5] He then proceeds to do so in a long and complex passage in which he identifies who those responsible for the attacks in 'Vascony' were. The Latin text says, to give just a very short résumé, that there was a certain barbarian people (*gens*) called the *Daphnica* which took its name from its first king who was called *Daphnicus* in his own lifetime:

[1] J.-F. Le Nail, D. Schaad, and C. Servelle, 'La cité de Tarbes et le castrum Bigorra-Saint-Lézer', p. 104.
[2] As correctly stated by N. Rosapelly and X. de Cardaillac, *La cité de Bigorre* (Tarbes, 1890), pp. 67-68; F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 36; F. Lot, 'L'énigme de « Cieutat »', p. 301.
[3] One is presuming here that the solar eclipse mentioned by Bertrand is really referring to that of 840, which is just an assumption.
[4] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis ab urbe condita cunctis mortalibus apprime dignum conspectibus* (Toulouse, 1515), p. 30. There are no page numbers in this work; I use here the pages from the digitalised version available and downloadable online at:
http://basededonnees.archives.toulouse.fr/4DCGI/Web_VoirLaNotice/11_01/RES343/ILUMP9999.
[5] N. Bertrand, *Les Gestes des Tholosains* (trans. 1517), p. 39, for which see the long note below.

'Gens quedem est barbara […] que a suo primo rege Daphico daphnica est usque ho-vie vocitata.'[1] He later calls these *gens Daphnica* simply *daphni or daphni barbari*.[2]

In the very condensed French 1517 translation of this long passage, which is copied *verbatim* into the 1555 translation, we read:

> Il y a une gent barbare, laquelle premierement fut appellée Daphnicque, pour son Roy Daphnus. Et est fort adonnée a bataille, sans auoir aucune couleur de raison & pouoir, aduint que eulx pillant par diuerses regions, vindrent en Gascogne, duquel pays les habitateurs encores estoient infidelles, & pource par pourueyance divine les Barbares furet enuoyés pour corriger leurs insolences.[3]

That the barbarians had been sent by God to correct the inhabitants' insolences is just a *topos* used throughout the Middle Ages, but here these particular barbarians named after their first king *Daphnus/Daphnicus* arrived in a 'Gascony' whose people were still infidels. That is, they were still not yet Christian, which certainly seems a strange statement if the ninth century is being referred to.

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[1] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 31.
[3] N. Bertrand, *Les gestes des Toulousains* (trans. 1555), p. 55. The 1517 translation says exactly the same thing: see *Les Gestes des Tholosain* (trans. 1517), pp. 39-40. The 1517 translation although written at Toulouse was printed in Lyons, for which see *Les Gestes des Tholosains et d'aultres nations de l'environ, premièrement escriptz en langaige latin par discret et lettré homme maistre Nichole Bertrandi, advocat tres facond en parlement a Tholose et apres translates en françoys. Item les Ordonnances royaulx du pays de Languedoc semblablement en langaige françoys* (Lyon, 1517), available online at http://tolosana.univ-toulouse.fr/notice/075568306. According to V. Lamazou-Duplan, 'Lorsque la greffe prend', p. 89: 'Le traducteur n'est pas nommé mais Nicolas Bertrand, toujours actif à cette date, n'a probablement pas été étranger à cette entreprise.' Nevertheless, the librarian of Toulouse Antoine Le Blanc was certainly the instigator and possibily the 'collaborator' of this translation, and if we read the introduction of this translation closely (see N. Bertrand, *Les Gestes des Tholosains* (1517), pp. 3-6) we might even suggest he was actually the translator. The 1555 translation of Bertrand's *Opus* is called *Les gestes des Toulousains et d'autres nations de l'environ. Composées premièrement en latin par feu monsieur maistre Nicolas Bertrand, tres exellant personnaige & tres facond advocat au parlement de Tolose. Et depuys faictes françoises, reveüs & augmentées de plusieurs histoires qui ne feurent oncq imprimées* (Toulouse, 1555), it is available and downloadable online at http://tolosana.univ-toulouse.fr/fr/notice/075568551. The 1555 translation which appears to have been the work of Guillaume de La Perrière (1499-1565?) who dedicates the work to Nicolas Bertrand's son François Bertrand, president of the parliament of Toulouse, who had been his schoolmate. Guillaume says he had been approached by a printer in Toulouse (Jacques Colomiez) to prepare an edition of Bertrand's work worthy of posterity. He also says that he (Guillaume) wanted to smooth (*limer*) and correct the text a little because there were several faults regarding the order of time and some other things transported and put in a place '*non requis*'. But this 1555 translation is in fact, with a minor few changes and additions, but nothing at all pertaining to the case we are examining here, almost word for word the same as the 1517 version. Certainly, both translations do leave out great parts of Bertrand's Latin text and the 1555 translation adds other things not found in the original, but I leave it for a scholar better qualified than I to examine all the relationships between the Latin text and the two subsequent and almost identical French translations.

I am not sure that the condensed French translations really capture the true and full essence and the extent of Bertrand's original Latin text, even though Bertrand himself 'n'a probablement pas été étranger à cette entreprise', that is to the 1517 translation.[1]

We are first told in the original Gothic Latin text, if I can précis it,[2] that these *gens Daphnica/Daphni* were a most barbarous, warlike and severe people who carried out many atrocities. Eventually they came west towards the setting sun, to the islands and the coasts of the Ocean in Brittany,[3] and made a circuit of adjacent regions and into royal lands (*terraz regna*), using their wind-blown warships to do so. As they advanced, they committed numerous massacres and afflicted the people greatly.[4]

Thus far this very general and we may say very generic story in the original Latin text might indeed seem to support the idea that Bertrand's *Daphni* really meant *Dani*, that is Danes or Northmen. He may have been referring to the Scandinavian incursion made via the coasts of Brittany to Nantes in 841 to 843, but, thus far at least, it could also refer to the move from the Seine to the Loire in 862, both of which are told of in many earlier sources that Bertrand may have had or have heard of second hand.

But then in the immediately following sentences Bertrand tells of some people (we will come to who these may have been) whom God was acquainted with and who were still offering burnt/cooked sacrifices (*quod magis veteri esse prospicitur* Bertrand adds) and pouring out filthy libations. Then we are told that the *daphni barbari*, who Bertrand says had been mentioned earlier, having been stirred up/excited by their ravages and devastations in the most cultivated/refined maritime provinces along the western littoral, came farther by the righteous judgement of God and 'by chance' fell on *Vasconia*, a country which later (*ex post*) was to receive the most faithful bishops.[5]

It might appear (to me at least) that the people who were still offering burnt sacrifices etc. in the original 1515 text must be referring to the pagan *Daphni*, but this is rather contradicted by the 1517 (and later 1555) translation published only two years after the publication of the 1515 *Opus*, and which may show Bertrand's own hand, which says the *Daphni* 'vindrent en Gascogne, duquel pays les habitateurs encores estoient infidelles, & pource par pourueyance divine les Barbares furet enuoyés pour corriger leurs insolences'; meaning that it was the

[1] V. Lamazou-Duplan, 'Lorsque la greffe prend', p. 89.
[2] I hope this at least captures the gist. It is a pity that Dom Brugèles, who was certainly an excellent Latinist, simply redacted this whole section out, and as a consequence Bladé did not include it in his French résumé.
[3] I presume this is what Bertrand means by *versus britaniam ad*, and not Britain?
[4] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30, col. 4.
[5] *Ibid*.

inhabitants of Gascony who were still infidels when the *Daphni* came. When this is coupled with the statement that Gascony would only *ex post* receive faithful bishops, then it seems to indicate that Bertrand has thrown into his mix some arrival of some generic barbarians in Gascony at an earlier time, maybe even Goths?

To finish with that part of Nicolas Bertrand's story which was completely redacted out by Dom Brugèles, before telling of an arrival in front of Bordeaux Bertrand gives a long polemic or even diatribe against the people of *Vasconia*, which I will not investigate here, but which says amongst many other things that they were bestially-minded men who did not follow God,[1] which again seems to support the idea of an early arrival of the *Daphni* in Gascony.

It is after this we first are told of their arrival at Bordeaux and the subsequent events, as transcribed generally accurately by Dom Brugèles.

Bertrand's whole story of the *gens Daphica/Daphni* culminating in their eventual but undated arrival at Bordeaux and their subsequent devastations in Gascony is placed by him after some quasi-historical information regarding the era of the Merovingian king Dagobert I (603-639) and his brother Charibert II (d. 632) who was briefly 'king' at Toulouse, and immediately before another such story involving Toulouse placed specifically in the year 733, when it is said Charles Martel (d. 741) and his son Pippin the Short (d. 768) were still alive,[2] hence both long before the mid-ninth century.

Furthermore, immediately prior to the first mention of Totilus and the rest, Bertrand has a section heading reading 'De aliquibus gothos & barbaros insultibus i tholosanos & vasconias factis. Et de beati Licerrii grandi miraculo pro populo suo';[3] or in the two French translations: 'De aucuns Assaulx des Barbares & Gothz faitz contre les Tolosains & Gascons, Et du miracle de sainct Licere pour son peuple.'[4] Bertrand then tells of how a certain *Licere* (Lizier) was a pupil of 'Saint' Fauste, the bishop of Tarbes, and how he was made bishop of Couserans by his uncle Bishop Quintien (*Quintin*) of Rodez,[5] which at face value at least would place him in the early sixth century.[6]

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[1] A translation of this passage would be most welcome.

[2] Bertrand, at least in the 1517 and 1555 French translations of his *Opus*, said this was told of by a certain 'Guaguin', which means Robert Gaguin's late fifteenth-century *Compendium de origine et gestis Francorum*. For Gauguin's works see S. Charrier, *Recherches sur l'œuvre latine en prose de Robert Gaguin (1433-1501)* (Paris, 1996); F. Collard, *Un historien au travail à la fin du XVe siècle : Robert Gaguin* (Geneva, 1996).

[3] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 29, col. 4.

[4] N. Bertrand, *Les Gestes des Tholosains* (trans. 1517), p. 38; *idem*, *Les gestes des Toulousains* (trans. 1555), p. 50.

[5] Bishop Quintien of Rodez is, in his tradition, reputed to have fled the Visigoths in the early sixth century and then became the bishop of Clermont.

[6] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30; *idem*, *Les Gestes des Tholosains* (trans. 1517), p. 39; *idem*, *Les gestes des Toulousains* (trans. 1555), pp. 54-55.

Without wanting to enter into a long discussion of the complex legend and miracles of Saint Lizier, what Bertrand does here is make his *Licere* (Lizier) the same person as Bishop *Lycerius/Glycerius* who attended the pan-Gallic council of Agde (dep. Hérault) in 506. This identification is most unlikely to be the case.

Bertrand then tells a long story involving the Merovingian king Dagobert I (d. 638/639),[1] his successor Sigebert III (d. 656), and the Iberian Visigothic king Sisnand/Sisnando (r. 631-636) and his later successor Reccesuinth (r. 653-672). All this, although Bertrand rather garbles it, is taken directly from the *Chronicle of Fredegar* and its Continuations, although of course Bertrand also mixes in much dubious information concerning Saint Lizier.[2]

There is nothing in Bertrand's long passage which seems in any way to refer to any events other than those which happened in the seventh century. But then, it appears, some other 'barbarians', who we are not told, reached Toulouse where they were 'first' repulsed by the Toulousian's forces ('Repulsus ergo primo a tholasonos exercitu […]'). After this they went to Couserans (dep. Ariège), in which 'second' place they were forced to flee by Saint Licere/Lizier: '[…] itinera usque coseranicum intuitu vastans: secondo loco sancto dei Licerio fuge datus lupus repar fuit.'[3] This would seem to be Bertrand's great 'miraculo pro populo suo', or as the translation of his text puts it: 'Le bon sainct [Licere/Lizier] fut renommé en miracles, & principalement quant luy tout seul auecques l'ayde de Dieu par ces prieres & oraisons fut cause de la destruction de ses ennemys. Iacoyt que tout le peuple feust en grande crainte.'[4]

The important thing for our purposes is that it is very clear that Nicolas Bertrand really had no idea where to place the legend and miracles of Saint Lizier, whichever sources he was using.

It is straight after this that Bertrand introduces Totilus and then the invasion of the barbarians called *gens daphnica* and *daphni*.[5] Then we get the list of all places attacked and destroyed by these barbarians and how they twice defeated the *Vascones*, but the culmination of this whole story is in fact how these *daphni* were eventually defeated by *dux* Totilus's *Vaccaei* on the river

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[1] Dagobert I was the 'king' of Austrasia in 623-34, king of all the Franks between 629 and 634, and king of Neustria and Burgundy from 629 to 639.

[2] Although Fredegar's story of Dagobert and the Visigoth Sisnand does involve Toulouse there was no 'assault' against Toulouse or Gascony by the Visigoths, nor did the later Visigothic king Reccesuinth make any such assaults.

[3] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30, col. 3. Now some early historians tried to make this invasion as being undertaken by the Visigothic king Reccesuinth, but this makes no sense as has been many times demonstrated.

[4] N. Bertrand, *Les gestes des Toulousains* (trans. 1555), pp. 54-55.

[5] Introduced in the original text by the Latin section heading: 'De quadam alia vastatione Vasco[n]ie usqz thlam [Toulouse]: quo tempore biarnenses vaccei, vocitabuntur' (*Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 30, col. 3), and in the 1517 translation (*Les Gestes des Tholosains* (trans. 1517), p. 39) by: 'Dune [*sic*] bataille qui fut faicte contre gasconge iusques a tholose.' It is most interesting to note that in all that follows there is no mention of any devastation or battle which reached *jusqu'à* Toulouse.

Garonne (*garumnam fluvium*) and chased out of the country, and here we hear that this was achieved with the intervention of Saint Lizier, which is obviously the miracle, or one of the miracles, Bertrand had referred to earlier.[1]

In my opinion all this is further support for the view that what Bertrand did in the text we are concerned with here, and as he does repeatedly elsewhere, is take bits and pieces from traditions and from existing annals, chronicles and histories, often concerning quite distinct places at disparate times and weaves a story out of them, much as a modern historical novelist might do. He was, as noted already, an inveterate historical *bricoleur*.

To return to the name *gens daphnica* and their supposed early king *Daphnicus/Daphnus*, the only person I can think of who was called something like this was the late first-century Dacian king called *Diurpaneus* (*Diurpanei Dacorum regis*), who fought the forces of the Roman emperor Domitian near the Danube in the late first century, as mentioned by the Braga (now in Portugal) historian Paulus Orosius in his *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII* (*Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*), written in the late fourth century and early fifth century.[2] Many later writers did borrow from Orosius's *Histories*, indeed there is even an early tenth- or late ninth-century Arabic 'translation' of Orosius's *Seven Books of History*.[3]

In his sixth-century *Getica* Jordanes appropriates *Diurpaneus* and makes this Dacian king a Goth: 'Dorpaneus held command over the Goths', 'Gothis autem Dorpaneus principatum agebat'.[4] Pope Gregory 'the Great' (d. 604) also mentions him in his *Dialogue* of the 'Life of Saint Benedict'.

It is perhaps also worth noting that Dudo of Saint-Quentin and his later followers, for example first William of Jumièges, who were both writing centuries before Bertrand, call the Danes *Dacians*. Jordanes had made the Dacian *Diurpaneus* into a Goth and Bertrand was writing

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[1] N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 31, col. 2; L.-C. Brugèles, C*hroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 11; J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 487. Strangely the translation of 1517 (and hence also that of 1555) omitted this whole part of Bertrand's original Latin text.

[2] *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*, ed. K. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889), book 7.10. He is often equated, rightly or wrongly, with his 'successor' *Decabulus* who fought the emperor Trajan so hard, and whose eventual suicide when cornered by the Romans is immortalised on Trajan's Column.

[3] See A. R. Christys, 'Orosius and Vikings in the histories of early medieval Iberia', in M. Maser and K. Herbers (eds.), *Von Mozarabern zu Mozarabismen: zur Vielfalt kultureller Ordnungen auf der mittelalterlichen Iberischen Halbinsel* (Münster, 2014), pp. 297-306.

[4] C. C. Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes* (Princeton/London, 1915), p. 72. 'Jordanes's *Getica*, the principal narrative source for Gothic history, dates from the mid-sixth century, and conflates stories of Goths with narratives that in earlier sources refer to Scythians and Dacians, and also to *Gutones* and *Getae*': see S. Ghosh, *The Barbarian Past in Early Medieval Historical Narrative*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Toronto, 2009), p. 18. In fact, this is precisely what Nicolas Bertrand does as well in many places. Is it also of any significance that this Dacian *Diurpaneus* was said in Jordanes's *Getica* to have been the successor of a Dacian king called 'Coryllus', which is rather reminiscent of 'Totilus', who in the 1555 translation of Bertrand is once called 'Cortilas'? But this is probably a thought too far.

about Visigothic times (although in the seventh century) in the Novempopulania in his long lead-up to his story of Totilus etc. It should also be remembered that the Visigoths did actually occupy Bordeaux in the early fifth century, and probably much of the Novempopulania (later Gascony) as well, and they remained there for a century.

Nicolas Bertrand loved antiquarian or archaic terms and names, he even often called the Gascons or *Vascones* the *Vaccaei*.[1] Was he getting in on this whole appropriation act (as had both Jordanes and Dudo of Saint-Quentin), using these texts concerning the early Dacian/Goth *Diurpaneus*/*Dorpaneus*, the later identity of the Dacians with the Danes by early Norman writers, and finding in *Diurpaneus*/*Dorpaneus*, for whatever reason, a good progenitor, who he calls *Daphincus*/*Daphnus*, for some barbarians who had invaded 'Gascony' for his historical *bricolage*? I do not know but it is certainly possible. Now Bertrand could well have imagined his *gens daphnica* as being Northmen or 'Danes' in the ninth century, but he might equally have seen them as being Goths in Aquitaine and Gascony in earlier centuries, who he tellingly explicitly mentions in the long introduction to the text about Totilus, and all of this, as Bertrand's section heading makes clear, is just to provide a setting for the various miracles of Saint Lizier.

In summary, it is not at all clear that Bertrand was really talking in his story about 'Danes' in the mid-ninth century although he may have been. It is really only the misdated reference to a solar eclipse tacked onto the beginning of the story that allowed Marca, followed by many others, including Brugèles and of course later Mussot-Goulard, to suggest such a thing. I therefore do not think that Nicolas Bertrand's sixteenth-century concoction should really be used as evidence for an extensive desolation and destruction of Gascony in the mid-ninth century. Alhough Bladé got many things wrong regarding the Northmen, I think we should agree with his statement that: 'Il suffit d'ouvrir le livre de Bertrandi pour se convaincre que, sous l'influence patriotisme de clocher, ce Toulousain s'épanche souvent, dans le latin pseudo-cicéronien de son temps, en toutes sortes d'imaginations extravagantes. Tel est évidemment son récit en ce qui concerne la dévastation de la Gascogne par les Normands. Mais les preuves du faux, et celles de la

[1] In the original Latin text Bertrand often called the 'Gascons' by the archaic name *Vaccaei.* Totilus, although said to have been *dux potentissimus extitit Vasconiae*, is also said to rule over *universam Vacceorum gentem* and the 'Gascons' are later twice simply called *Vaccaei*. Now the name *Vaccaei* was used in Roman times and by Isidore of Seville for one tribal group living in northern Iberia/Spain settled along the middle Ebro valley close to the central slopes of the Pyrenees, and later by Isidore of Seville for the *Vascones* of northern Spain - whether or not these two peoples were exactly the same, for which see in the first instance R. Collins, 'The Vaccaei, the Vaceti and the rise of Vasconia', *Studio Historica*, 6 (1988), pp. 211-23. And, of course, it was these *Vascones* who came 'bounding' over the Pyrenees from the 580s, as first told of by Gregory of Tours, and who settled in the Novempopulania and gave the region the name Gascony.

personnalité du faussaire y fourmillent à ce point, que cent pages ne souffriraient pas à les administrer toutes.'[1]

Eauze, Auch and the legend of Saint Austinde

Not wishing to ignore any of Mussot-Goulard's arguments regarding *Normands* in Gascony, we must also examine some supposed evidence from the monastery of Saint-Orens at Auch (dep. Gers) which Musset-Goulard tries to use to support her date of 840 for the arrival of the Northmen in Gascony.

Clearly following Dom Brugèles once again,[2] she tries to make much of Bertrand's own comment at the end of his story that all the just earlier described desolations in Gascony took place in the times of the previously mentioned 'principis Totili, et Taurini Auxiensis, et Heraldi (*sic*) episcope Bigorritanae urbis'.[3] We know - if this is not too strong a verb to use here - from his very obscure legend that Taurin was the metropolitan of Eauze (dep. Gers), he supposedly founded the episcopal see of Auch and was subsequently martyred, reputedly in the early fourth century in the forest of Verdale near to Aubiet (dep. Gers).[4] I will not explore the legend of this early bishop Taurin any more here, not only because it is extremely obscure and complex but also because it is not really directly relevant to any Northmen in the ninth century.

But based on their belief in Bertrand's text both Brugèles and Mussot-Goulard suggest that there was another 'second' bishop of Auch called Taurin in the mid-ninth century. Quite explicitly following Brugèles yet again, Mussot-Goulard mentions an unpublished manuscript 'provenant de Saint-Orens d'Auch', which had been 'recueillé par Daignan du Sendat'[5] in the eighteenth century which concerned the consecration of the church of Sainte-Marie at Auch, to where, supposedly, various otherwise unknown bishops came 'au temps de l'évêque Taurin et du duc Totilon', which Mussot-Goulard would place in 840 and uses as independent 'evidence' for her whole construction and date of 840. Let us quote her in full regarding this Auch text:

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[1] J.-F. Bladé, 'Géographie politique du Sud-Ouest de la Gaule pendant la domination romaine (suite et fin.)', *Annales du Midi : revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 6. 23 (1894), pp. 257-71, at p. 260.

[2] L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 11. For the original text see N. Bertrand, *Opus de Tholosanorum gestis* (1515), p. 31, col. 2.

[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91.

[4] See in the first instance M. Bordes (ed.), *Histoire d'Auch et du pays d'Auch* (Roanne, 1980); L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, pp. 34-35; J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 488.

[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 31. Louis d'Aignan du Sendat (1681-1764) lived all his life in Auch where he was both 'vicaire général et archidiacre de la cathédrale Sainte Marie sous trois archevêques différents'. His extensive writings are today to be found in the municipal library of Auch. The text referred to by Mussot-Goulard is B. M. Auch MSS Daigan du Sendat, vol. 73, fol. 1408.

> Il fait connaitre une liste d'évêques gascons pour l'année 840 [...]. Les lueurs [glimmers] apportées par ce texte, tendraient à prouver que presque tous les sièges épiscopaux gascons étaient pourvus de titulaires en 840 : il s'agit du récit de la consécration de l'église Sainte-Marie d'Auch au temps au temps de l'évêque Taurin et du duc Totilon. L'autel de Sainte-Marie de l'église d'Eauze, avait été transféré à Auch. La dédicace de l'église eut lieu en 840. Les évêques de Novempopulanie accomplirent le voyage jusqu'à la cité d'Auch afin d'apporter leur soutien à l'évêque Taurin. On note cependant un absent: le titulaire d'Eauze.[1]

We will return to all the 'Gascon' bishops of the Novempopulania mentioned in this text shortly, as well as the absence of a bishop of Eauze. According to Mussot-Goulard, 'L'existence d'un évêque d'Auch du nom Taurin au milieu du IXe siècle est confirmé par une charte bigourdane qui indique également le nom d'un évêque de Bigorre (Heraldus ici, Seraldius (?) dans le texte précédent). Cette charte bigourdane, datée aussi de 840,[2] donne la même liste épiscopale que la charte de Saint-Orens d'Auch'.[3] So this text is a confirmation of the Taurin bishop of Auch mentioned by Nicolas Bertrand when he was trying to place the events he had just told of.[4]

I have not been able to consult this Auch text as copied by Louis d'Aignan du Sendat (and now found in the municipal library of Auch) but Dom Brugèles obviously had,[5] and it was from him that Mussot-Goulard took her ideas on this subject. Brugèles said that Aignan's text is 'the legend of Saint Austinde, composed in the middle of the seventeenth century'.[6] Saint Austinde was an archbishop of Auch in the eleventh century.[7] Brugèles quotes the following very short extract:

> Taurinus Metropolitae Elusanus [Eauze], post Elusae devastionem, quae 840, anno accidit, in Translatione Altarts & Metropolitanae Sedi ad Ecclesiam Auscitanam [Auch] facta, Templum aedificavit, et honorem Nativitatis Deiparae dedicavit.[8]

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[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91.
[2] Note that the 'charte de Bigorre' is now suddenly itself dated to 840.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 91 and nn. 171,172.
[5] Whether Brugèles and Aignan had copied from the same, now lost, original text of Saint-Orens at Auch, as suggested by Mussot-Goulard, *ibid*, p. 31, or whether Brugèles used Aignan's transcription is unclear.
[6] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 52, my translation.
[7] See A. Breuils, *Saint Austinde. Archevêque d'Auch (1000-1068) et La Gascogne au XIme siècle* (Auch, 1895).
[8] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 52.

Brugèles maintained that the metropolitan see of Eauze had been abandoned for more than a century since the time of the ravages of the Saracens in *c.*732 or afterwards, although his argumentation for this is somewhat circular and tendentious,[1] and he thus concludes that the author of this seventeenth-century Auch text 'se trompe dans l'époque du ravage d'Euse (Eauze)' - that is supposedly 840.[2] Mussot-Goulard, however, given her belief in all these late texts and the pivotal date of 840 concludes in a circular manner that 'l'absence signalée d'un évêque de Gascogne occidentale en 840 [that is of Eauze] peut trouver une explication dans les raids normands'.[3]

More importantly for our purposes, Brugèles recognised that Nicolas Bertrand's 'charte de Bigorre' was the *prétexte*, that is I suppose the source, from where the author of the seventeenth-century legend of Saint Austinde took the mention of Bishop Taurin's move from Eauze to Auch; although he does not bring out the implications of this as well as he might have.[4] But whilst Brugèles does say, although unfortunately without quoting the text, that in this Auch legend of Saint Austrinde there is also a mention of a 'Totilus', called here a king,[5] his belief in the veracity of Bertrand's text (and in the hypothetical 'charte de Bigorre') is so strong that he cannot see the correspondences between the two texts regarding both 'Totilus' and the year 840, when there really was a solar eclipse, which clearly demonstrate a borrowing in one way or the other. The words 'praefati principis Totili, et Taurini Auxiensis ...' at the end of Bertrand's text are undoubtedly his own, as mentioned earlier. Either Bertrand took the names of Totilus and Taurin from an original, and therefore older, Auch text, as partially transcribed/copied in the eighteenth century by Louis d'Aignan du Sendat and L.-C. Brugèles, or, perhaps likelier, this Auch text, which Brugèles says is a legend of Saint Austinde written in the seventeenth century, took the name of Totilus from Bertrand himself, and, regarding the date, the later Auch author may have seen the mention of a solar eclipse in Bertrand's original text or one of the two sixteenth-century translations which presage barbarian destructions in Gascony, and being aware that there was a solar eclipse in 840 had inserted this date for his story of Eauze, Auch and Taurin. I doubt we will ever know the truth, but what we cannot do, as Mussot-Goulard fully does and as Brugèles partially does, is use this Auch text to suggest it is independent support for Bertrand's fable of a vast destruction of Gascony by the Northmen starting in 840.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91.
[4] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 52. Although (*ibid.*, p. 69) he does say that 'Taurin deuxieme, n'est point dans le Catalogue d'Auch'.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

Finally, although the question of which Gascon bishoprics were still functioning in the middle of the ninth century is somewhat outside our field of enquiry a few words are perhaps called for. As already noted, Mussot-Goulard says that the Auch text gives 'la même liste episcopale' as the *charte bigourdane* (which is really just the list of Nicolas Bertrand whether or not it was taken from the 'Lescar fragment'), and, elsewhere, that 'la liste des évêques dans le texte bigourdan est parallèle à celle d'Auch: seules les lectures des noms sont différentes', and she uses this as independent evidence for her belief in Bertrand's text, and indeed vice versa.[1] Now if these *noms* mean those of bishops this is not true because Bertrand only mentions Heraldus and Taurin whereas the Auch text gives many other otherwise unheard-of names. But let us compare these two lists. In Bertrand's text we find that after a supposed unsuccessful attack on Bordeaux those involved (not 'Dani') had then, and in this purported order, attacked Bazas, Sos, Lectoure and *Aquis* (Cauterets according to Bertrand but likely Dax); after which Bertrand says the cities of *Laburdis* (probably Bayonne), Oloron, and Lescar suffered the same fate, as did later *Tarbiense castrum* (either Tarbes itself or Saint-Lézer 15 km north in the canton of Vic)[2] and *Orrensem urbem*. Now Brugèles would have it that all these supposed Scandinavian attacks happened in *c*.844,[3] and that it was only after Totilus had defeated the Northmen on the river Garonne, and in fact chased them out of the region, that under the auspices of this same Totilus the gathering of so many bishops took place at Auch, as told of in the Auch text and supposedly in 845.[4]

On the other hand, Mussot-Goulard says: 'La charte bigourdane [...] fait le récit des attaques normandes à Bordeaux, Bazas, Sos, Lectoure pour le Nord, ainsi que Dax, Bayonne, Tarbes, Aire, pour le Sud.'[5] It is to be noted that she identifies *Aquis* as Dax, which may be so, but it does go completely against the statement in Bertrand's text that it was nowadays called Cauterets', which Ferdinand Lot showed was nonsense.[6] In addition, Bertrand's *Orrensem urbem* is perhaps incorrectly identified by Mussot-Goulard with Aire (Aire-sur-l'Adour). But much more importantly for our present purposes, Mussot-Goulard places this meeting of so many bishops at Auch in 840 (of course), seemingly immediately before or at the same time as the arrival of Northmen in the region, and uses it as being evidence that in around 840 'le pouvoir royal était bien restauré en Gascogne, ainsi que les églises',[7] and that it was, it would seem, indeed

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91 and n. 174.
[2] For which see J.-F. Le Nail, D. Schaad, C. Servelle, 'La cité de Tarbes et le castrum Bigorra-Saint-Lézer'.
[3] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 69.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne* p. 91.
[6] F. Lot, 'L'énigme de « Cieutat »'.
[7] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 92. I tend to agree with M. Pelat, *Les identités ethniques en Novempopulanie*, p. 130: 'Contrairement à ce qu'a soutenu R. Mussot-Goulard, la *gens* wasconne n'apparaît pas en voie d'intégration complète à l'Empire vers 840', and (p. 130, n. 539): 'Les arguments de R. Mussot-Goulard

then ('à ce moment-là') that 'de graves crises secouèrent la Gascogne que les rois s'y déchirèrent, que les Normands destructeurs pillèrent ses rivages, ses vallées'.[1]

Leaving to one side the question of whether this general destruction of Gascony by some *Normands* ever happened at all, and its precise dating, the Auch text says, to use Brugèles's copy/summary, that the bishops who met at Auch included Sigin of Toulouse, Concordius of Agen, Donat of Bazas, Spondeus of Lydie ('ou Libie, qui est un Païs dans l'Asie mineure'), Lubronius of Aqs, Spaleus of Lescar, Geraud of Oleron, Sedacius of Labour ('c'est-à présent Bayonne'), Seralpius of Orre ('c'est-à-dire, Bigorre, à présent Tarbes'), Maxime of Cominges and Beat of Ausiris. Brugèles thought that *Lydie* was 'Libie, qui est un Païs dans l'Asie mineure', and that *Ausiris* was 'le Païs appellé anciennement *Hus*, où nâquit le célebre Job, en la Palestine'.[2] Both of these suggestions seem rather far-fetched for a meeting of bishops at Auch which supposedly took place in the mid-ninth century. But it is significant that Brugèles rightly acknowledged : 'Il est vrai qu'on ne trouve point les noms que je viens de raporter de ces Evéques dans les Catalogues de leurs Eglises.'[3]

Mussot-Goulard, after asking, 'Quelles sont les *civitas* cachées sous les exotiques noms de Lydie, Ausiris ?'[4] conjectures that *Lydie* may mean Lectoure and that *Ausiris* may mean Aire.[5] But all this is probably just wishful thinking. What she is just trying to do is to make every scrap of 'evidence' that she can find, however scanty and unreliable, fit with her preconceived ideas of what had happened involving Northmen in Gascony around this time, that is in and after 840.

Even so there is certainly a partial overlap between this list of the seats of Gascon bishops and that found in Bertrand's list of the Gascon cities supposedly destroyed by the *gens daphnica*, although it is not really as Mussot-Goulard would have it completely 'the same list'. Besides Taurin of Auch who appears in both texts - but it should be noted that Auch was not among the towns listed as being destroyed in Bertrand's text - we find in both texts Tarbes/Bigorre, Bazas, Oloron, Lescar, Labourd (Bayonne), and Dax (if this is *Aquis/Aqs*). Leaving out any discussion of Concordius of Agen, Spondeus of Lydie, Maxime of Cominges and Beat of Ausiris, the mention of Bayonne in both texts is interesting. Without wishing to get into a very hoary historiographical subject, there was, I state unequivocally, no bishop of Bayonne in the ninth

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proviennent, d'une part, de sources discutables (le duc Totilon n'est attesté que par la transmission au XVIe siècle d'un cartulaire de Bigorre, aujourd'hui perdu, tandis que les listes d'évêques gascons, rapportées par Daignan du Sendat, sont visiblement fautives ou interpolées et ne permettent pas de conclure à une politique religieuse carolingienne très active.'

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 92.

[2] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, pp. 69-70.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 91, n. 172.

century,[1] but as Bertrand has there being a barbarian attack on the town this is no doubt why the author of the later Auch text has a bishop of Bayonne attending this meeting at Auch.

In terms of the mention of a bishop of Toulouse called *Sigin* in the Auch text (which seems perhaps a little suspiciously to be the same name as 'Siguin/Seguin' borne by the two counts of Gascony and 'dukes' of Bordeaux) participating in this assembly of Gascon bishops at Auch, Mussot-Goulard says that: 'La présence, dans cette même réunion épiscopale gasconne [at Auch in 840 according to her], de l'évêque de Toulouse confirme cette stratégie royale de promotion du Fezensac tout proche du Toulousain franc, comme elle illustre les influences septimaniennes en Gascogne.'[2] The 'royal strategy' she is referring to seems to relate to her immediately preceding sentences that: 'Il est probable que l'installation du siège métropolitain à Auch fut contemporaine des premières années de règne de Charles le Chauve', and that: 'Cela s'inscrivait dans une politique de restauration des églises dont la liste de 840 est un témoin,'[3] but this is all very unclear, conjectural and teleological. Indeed, we have no idea who the bishop of Toulouse in *c*.840 was. After a bishop 'Mantion' who perhaps died around 820 we only next hear of a bishop of Toulouse called Samuel in a charter of Charles the Bald in April 844.[4]

Finally, and also regarding the issue of Toulouse, Brugèles suggested that it was at the synod/council of Toulouse in 829 that the idea of fixing the seat of the archbishopric of 'Gascony' at Auch, and that it had 'apparently' been 'projetté, ou même ordonné' on this occasion.[5] It is true that from December 828 Louis the Pious had ordered that synods/councils should be held in 829 at Mainz, Paris, Lyons and Toulouse, in which, says Mayke de Jong 'bishops Otgar of Mainz, Ebo of Rheims, Agobard of Lyons and Noto of Toulouse [*recte* Arles] were to preside over these gatherings; and altogether sixteen archbishops were explicitly named and ordered to attend, together with their suffragans'.[6] These councils 'should meet on the Octave of Pentecost

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[1] Not even a 'bishop' Léon who had supposedly come from Coutances and who had his head cut off by the Northmen, as commemorated by a wooden statue in my own local church in Cambo-les-Bains, and in the present district of Saint-Léon in Bayonne. I will write about the legend of Saint Léon at Bayonne at a later date.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 92. I have no idea where this idea of the promotion of Fezensac (later Vic-Fezensac) in the ninth century comes from, and I cannot explore it further here. C. Balagna, 'L'ancienne collégiale Saint-Pierre de Vic-Fezensac et son environnement', in *Actes de la 6e journée de l'Archéologie et de l'Histoire de l'Art de Gimont* (2017), pp. 46-77, at p. 48, says 'Toutefois, si les évêques d'Auch, devenus archevêques au moment de la destruction de la métropole d'Éauze au IXe siècle, paraissent avoir établi leur autorité sur la ville, il semble qu'ils doivent la partager avec les comtes de Fezensac et ce, depuis au moins le Xe siècle'; but here Balagna (p. 48, n. 18) only references Mussot-Goulard's *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 127-28, 168-69.

[3] *Ibid* .

[4] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 33, pp. 88-91, issued at Avens on the Tarn. Following J. F. Böhmer (*Regesta*, no. 1540), F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le Règne de Charles le Chauve,* p. 98, n. 3, p. 100, date this charter to 843. See *RAC*, ed. Tessier, *ibid*., for a discussion of the matter of dating.

[5] L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, pp. 51-52.

[6] M. de Jong, *The Penitential State. Authority and Atonement in the Ages of Louis the Pious (814-840)* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 170. See *Constitutio de synodis anno 829 in regno Francorum habendis* (December 828), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 184; *Hludowici et Hlotharii epistola generalis* (Dec. 828), *Capitularia regum*

(23 May)'; prior to which 'on the Octave of Easter (4 April) a group of *missi* should start their inquiries, gathering information that would presumably also benefit the bishops who had by then gathered'.[1] Of these planned synods only the proceedings of those held at Paris and Mainz have survived. As Mayke de Jong quite rightly observes, 'nothing is known of what went on in Lyons and Toulouse'.[2] Indeed there is no evidence that the planned synod of Toulouse under Archbishop Noto/Nothon of Arles and his colleagues from Narbonne and Bordeaux ever actually took place.[3] Even if it had, and even if according to Brugèles's conjecture the establishment of the seat of the archdiocese of 'Gascony' at Auch had been 'projetté, ou même ordonné' there, which I deem highly unlikely, why had it taken more than a decade for the meeting of Gascon bishops at Auch to finally take place, where supposedly they decided on the establishment of the seat of the archdiocese of Gascony at Auch?

Regarding the mention of some otherwise unknown bishop Sigin of Toulouse attending the Auch gathering, Nicolas Bertrand's *Opus de tholosanorum gestis* does not mention Toulouse as having been attacked by the *gens daphnica* (supposedly *Dani* according to Dom Brugèles), which seems rather surprising if his story is really about Northmen in the ninth century because the Northmen did actually attack or besiege Toulouse twice in the ninth century: in 844 and 864. Nevertheless because of his main subject, Toulouse itself, Bertrand always wanted to bring his

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Francorum, II, no. 185; *Capitula ab episcopis in placito tractanda* (beginning of 829), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 186; *Capitula de missis instruendis* (beginning of 829), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 187; *Capitulare missorum* (beginning of 829), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 188; *Tractoria de coniectu missis dando* (beginning of 829), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 189. To this should be added the prologue to the *Episcoporum ad Hludowicum imperatorem relatio* (summer 829), *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 196; all referenced in M. de Jong, *The Penitential State*, p. 170, n. 106. Regarding the first letter mentioned above (no. 184) see C. J. Hefele, *Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux*, vol. IV, book XXI (Paris, 1911), pp. 57-58: 'La lettre du roi précise ses intentions et liste nominativement les évêques devant participer à ces quatre conciles: Après avoir prescrit la célébration des conciles, la missive impériale développe uniquement cette pensée, que les malheurs des années précédentes étaient une juste punition de Dieu; pour ce motif, l'empereur désirait apaiser le Seigneur et lui donner satisfaction. « Dans ce but, disait l'empereur, nous décidons et arrêtons, sur le conseil des évêques et autres fidèles, la tenue de conciles dans quatre villes de notre empire. À Mayence se réuniront les archevêques Otgar de Mayence, Hadabald de Cologne, Héthi de Trêves et Bernuin de Besançon, avec leurs suffragants; à Paris, le futur archevêque (Aldrich) de Sens et les archevêques Ebbon de Reims, Ragnoard de Rouen et Landram de Tours, avec leurs suffragants; à Lyon, les archevêques Agobard (de Lyon), Bernard de Vienne, André de Tarentaise, Benoît d'Aix et Agéric d'Embrun, avec leurs suffragants; à Toulouse, les archevêques Nothon d'Arles, Barthélemy de Narbonne, Adalelm de Bordeaux et Agilulf de Bourges, avec leurs suffragants. Ils discuteront les réformes à introduire dans la vie des laïques et dans celle des clercs, et les causes qui ont entraîné les uns et les autres hors de la voie droite. Ils garderont le secret sur leurs délibérations qu'ils ne feront connaître à personne avant le moment voulu. Un notaire assermenté remplira sa fonction auprès de ces évêques et consignera le résultat de leurs délibérations.'

[1] See *Constitutio de synodis*, *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, no. 184, p. 2; M. de Jong, *The Penitential State*, p. 170 and n. 107.

[2] M. de Jong, *The Penitential State*, p. 176. She also says (*ibid.*): 'In Mainz almost the entire East-Frankish and Lotharingian episcopate was present, yet it remains unclear how this well-attended meeting dealt with the instructions from the court.'

[3] Why would this planned synod at Toulouse have been planned to be conducted by archbishops and bishops from Arles, Narbonne and Bordeaux if there had been a bishop of Toulouse *in situ* at the time?

city into the equation; this was his whole object. Thus in the two French translations of his work, in 1517 and 1555, the whole story of Totilus etc. is introduced with the heading: 'D'une bataille que fut faicte contre Gascogne iusques à Tolose.'[1] And after the story of the barbarians and Totilus has been told we read: 'C'este Guerre est a conter entre les aduersités des Toulosians, pour les peuples confins & voysins.'[2] But it is abundantly clear that Bertrand had no knowledge at all of the two real attacks on Toulouse by the Northmen; if he had had such knowledge he would undoubtedly have mentioned them more explicitly.

Mussot-Goulard thought that it is 'probable' that 'l'installation du siège métropolitain à Auch fut contemporaine des premières années de règne de Charles le Chauve',[3] hence in 840 or a little thereafter,[4] but this dating is not supported by any other evidence.[5] We do know, however, from a report of Hrabanus Maurus (Raban Maur), who died in 856, that at some point before his death Auch had already become the seat of the archdiocese of the Novempopulania. Hrabanus wrote: 'Auxitana metropolis cum sua provincia Novempopulanae.'[6] However at what exact point in the ninth century Auch had become the seat of the archdiocese of the Novempopulania (roughly later Gascony) remains completely uncertain.

To summarise a little: firstly, at what date we should place the transfer of the metropolitan seat of Gascony/the Novempopulania from Eauze to Auch remains contested; was it in 840, according to Mussot-Goulard, between 864 and 879, according to Bladé,[7] or in 845 according to Brugèles,[8] even though as already noted this latter author assumed Eauze had been destroyed by the Saracens in the eighth century? Secondly, had the establishment of the seat of the archdiocese at Auch been occasioned or prompted by a 'destruction' of Eauze, which is only mentioned in the seventeenth-century Auch 'Legend of Saint Austinde', which seems to me to be a late rationalisation for the

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[1] N. Bertrand, *Les gestes des Toulousains* (trans. 1555), p. 55.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 56.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 92.
[4] Elsewhere on several occasions she says explicitly 840.
[5] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 134, n. 4, says that the metropolitan see of Eauze 'was transferred to Auch (dep. Gers) sometime in the ninth century', adding that 'Gascony is almost undocumented in this period'. According to J.-F. Bladé ('Influence des métropolitains d'Eauze et des archevêques d'Auch', p. 392), there are two charters of the abbey of Pessan 'dated 835 and 836' where we find a bishop of Auch called Izimbard (*Izimbardi episcopo*). He references these charters as being given by J.-C. Brugelès, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 2, pp. 34-35. These two charters are indeed most interesting although they look like later forgeries to me. Brugelès (*ibid*., and p. 249) gets his dating for the first from the signature of count 'Azenario-Sancio' ('Aznar count of Hither Gascony' who died a horrible death in 836 according to Prudentius in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* (cf. *AB* 836: trans. Nelson, pp. 35-36)). But this charter was made, it says, 'in mensio Octobri, sub Carolo rege'. Indeed, the second charter dated to 836 by Dom Brugelès was signed by count 'Garsiano', and 'in mense Januario, anno sexto regnante Carolo Rege'. Brugelès (*ibid*., p. 249) says that 'Le Roi Charles le Chauve [...] regna en Aquitaine depuis l'an 831 jusqu'en 840', which is quite wrong.
[6] *PL*, 112, ed. Migne, cited by R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 92, n. 180.
[7] J.-F. Bladé, 'Influence des métropolitains d'Eauze et des archevêques d'Auch', pp. 392-97.
[8] J.-C. Brugelès, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 69.

transfer and the absence of any mention of Eauze or its archbishop for a very long time? Of course, believing that the Auch text is truly independent historical evidence Mussot-Goulard makes the absence of any bishop from Eauze involved in the supposed '840' meeting of bishops come to support 'Taurin' at Auch as being because of 'les raids normands';[1] so supposedly when all these bishops were meeting at Auch in 840 the Northmen were already raiding in western Aquitaine/Gascony,[2] and thus we must presume that Eauze was being/had been attacked as well in early 840 or even before. But if so why is Eauze also not mentioned by Nicolas Bertrand in his long litany of Gascon towns attacked by the *gens daphnica*? Bladé on the other hand entered into much garbled and very teleological reasoning to date the destruction of Eauze contradictorily to both to 846 and 851.[3] But just like Mussot-Goulard, Bladé makes this destruction caused by 'les Normands'.[4]

What is the relevance of all this to our subject of the Northmen in Aquitaine and Gascony? Putting to one side all the many uncertainties, the important fact for our purposes is that even in the seventeenth-century Auch text, which mentions a destruction of Eauze seemingly *before* 840, nowhere is it said that this destruction was made by Northmen. It is only Mussot-Goulard's and Bladé's preconceived assumptions on the truth of a general Scandinavian invasion of Gascony starting in the 840s that leads them to suggest such a thing, and even more importantly as them using it as independent support for Nicolas Bertrand's text which as I and others have suggested is probably from where the author of the Auch text (or even Aignan himself) took the year of 840. I can also only but support M. Pelat's statement that 'Les arguments de R. Mussot-Goulard proviennent, d'une part, de sources discutables (le duc Totilon n'est attesté que par la transmission au XVIe siècle d'un cartulaire de Bigorre, aujourd'hui perdu, tandis que les listes d'évêques gascons, rapportées par Daignan du Sendat, sont visiblement fautives ou interpolées et ne permettent pas de conclure à une politique religieuse carolingienne très active'.[5]

The 'Lescar fragment'

With regard to the part of Nicolas Bertrand's text which lists all the Gascon towns supposedly attacked by the Northmen after their failed assault on Bordeaux, there is another short and very

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 91.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] J.-F. Bladé, 'Influence des métropolitains d'Eauze et des archevêques d'Auch', pp. 393, 396.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 396.
[5] M. Pelat, *Les identités ethniques en Novempopulanie*, p. 130, n. 539.

strange story which Pierre de Marca said he found in a (typically now lost) Lescar cartulary.[1] The story reads:

> Post obitum B. Galactorii episcopi et martyris extitit quædam gens Gundalorum, et destruxit omnes civitates Gasconiæ, et corpora sanctorum quæ invenit destruxit, et subvertit flammis et igne: has civitates quæ destructæ fuerunt fuit, Aquis, Lascuris, Oloren, Ecclesia Tarbæ, civitas Auxiensis, civitas Elicina, metropolitana, Cosorensi, Convenasi, Lactoren, Sotiense, Basatense, Laburdensi, et sedes Vasconiæ fuerunt in oblivione multis temporibus quia nullas episcopus in eas introivit.[2]

Which Bladé interprets as follows:

> Après la mort du bienheureux Galactoire, évêque de Béarn, district qui devint plus tard le diocèse de Lescar, la nation des Gundales (*gens Gundalorum*) ruina toutes les cités de Gascogne (*Gasconiæ*), et détruisit par le feu les reliques des saints. Parmi les cités alors anéanties, notre texte nomme Dax (*Aquis*), Lescar (*Lascurris*), Oloron (*Oleron*), l'église de Tarbes (*ecclesia Tarbæ*), Auch (*civitas Auxiensis*), la métropole d'Eauze (*civitas Elicina metropolitana*), les sièges des diocèses de Couserans (*Cosorensi), de Comminges* (Convenasi), Sos (*Sotiense*), le diocèse de Bazas (*Basatense*) et celui de Labourd (*Laburdensi*). Ainsi, les sièges des évêchés de Gascogne (*sedes Gasconiæ*) demeurèrent longtemps dans l'oubli (*in oblivione multis temporibus*), car aucun évêque n'y pénétra.[3]

It is quite apparent that this undoubtedly late text, which I will call the 'Lescar fragment', is ostensibly concerned with the early sixth century following the death of Bishop Galactoire of Lescar in *c*.507.

Many of the scholars with whom we are concerned here regarding the Northmen acknowledge this. For example, Mussot-Goulard says that this text is 'relatif aux invasions qui sont suivit l'épiscopat de Galactoire' which, she says, are not the same invasions as those described by Bertrand ('le texte bigourdan') which are concerned with 'les invasions normandes du milieu du IXe siècle',[4] although she does not address the question of who had made these purported 'invasions' in the early sixth century following Galactoire's death.

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[1] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 35 and p. 38, n. VIII.
[2] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 482, n. 3; taken (and slightly altered) from P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 38, n. VIII.
[3] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 482.
[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 36, 39.

However, Pierre de Marca believed that the list of all the towns in the Novempopulania (roughly later Gascony) in the 'Lescar fragment' is independent evidence and support for the almost identical list found in Bertrand's work which Brugèles (and after him Mussot-Goulard) said he took from some bigourdian cartulary. Marca says that the 'l'ancienne Charte de Lescar […] tesmoigne que les Normans ruinerent les Douze Cités, de la Nouempopulanie', and that: 'La veille Charte de Gascogne alleguée par Nicolas Bertrandi en l'histoire de Toulouse, se conforme à celle de Lascar; & rapporte que les Danois ruinerent les Cités de Gascogne,' which he then lists.[1] He does not address the issue of that the text talks of Galactoire's death (in *c*.507), which is rather strange because he does discuss Galactoire extensively elsewhere in his book with regard to the Novempopulania in the early sixth century.[2] Neither does he question why the text says that it was the Vandals (*gens Gundalorum*) who were responsible for this destruction of the 'Gascon' cities, he simply assumes that the Lescar text's Vandals, 'Gundales' as he says, means *Nortmans*.[3]

Bladé, however, whilst he fully acknowledges that the 'Lescar fragment' is ostensibly referring to the early sixth century,[4] argued strongly that the story, most particularly the list of towns attacked, was likely from where Nicolas Bertrand got his list, which he had inserted into his pastiche about Totilus and the Northmen in Gascony, 'selon toute apparence, Bertrandi n'a fait, au contraire, que paraphraser longuement le court passage dudit cartulaire' of Lescar, but

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[1] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 35.

[2] *Ibid*., pp. 44, 67, 69. After referring to the fact that the 'Cartulaire de Lescar' is talking about events after Galactoire's death and contains traces of historical preoccupations, J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 483, quite rightly says: 'Marca n'a portant pas craint de l'utiliser comme authentique, et de l'invoquer comme une guarantie du passage […] de Nicolas Bertrandi concernant la déroute des Normands attributée à Totilus, duc prétendu de Vasconie, vers 848 [note this date which is purely his own guess]. Or, selon toute apparence, Bertrandi n'a fait, au contraire, que paraphraser longuement le court passage dudit cartulaire'.

[3] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 196. Dom Brugèles on the other hand strenuously denied that the Lescar text's listing of 'Gascon' cities destroyed was the same as that found in Bertrand's text. Brugèles says (*Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, pp. 48-49) after discussing the arrival of the *Sarrazins* in *Espagne* in 711 and their defeat of the Visigothic king Roderic, that they had entered into the Narbonnaise in 719 and fought against 'Eudes [Odo] Duc d'Aquitaine' [at Toulouse that is], and then they had entered 'dans Bordeaux' and defeated Eudes in battle, after which they ravaged all of Gascony on several occasions until the year 789 (!), destroying the towns and the churches there, which he says is recounted in many 'Histories of France' (referencing here only Gabriel de Lurbe's sixteenth-century *Burdigalensium rerum chronicon* and Arnauld Oihénart's seventeenth-century *Notitia utriusque Vasconiæ*) and also by 'une Charte de l'Eglise de Lescar' in which these 'Barbares sont appellez Vandales', which Brugèles says is a name ordinarily given, and indifferently, by 'les anciens Ecrivains' to enemies and foreign peoples. But there is not the slightest shred of reliable historical evidence that the Saracens of Abd al-Rahman destroyed all these 'Gascon' towns prior to the decisive battle near Poitiers in 732 (or even later in the century). All this just goes to show, whether regarding the 'Lescar fragment' or Nicolas Bertrand's hagiographical and legendary text, that we have not the least clue when these supposed attacks on all these Gascon cities happened, if they ever did at all, and who were those responsible. It would seem to me that what we find in the 'Lescar fragment' and in Bertrand's later list (whether or not Bertrand borrowed from the Lescar fragment) are later rationalisations for the disappearance of these 'Gascon' episcopal sees in the historical records for such a long time.

[4] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 483.

which Bertrand (according to Bladé) then seemingly places in the mid-ninth century.[1] Bladé's argument for this derivation is quite compelling but I will not repeat it in detail here.[2]

Let us delve a little deeper. The 'Lescar fragment' is a story about supposed events sometime after the death of Galactoire the second bishop of Lescar. Galactoire participated in the pan-Gallic synod of Agde in 506 with the approval of the Arian Visigothic king Alaric II. According to his legend contained in the *Breviary of Lescar* (*Bréviaire de Lescar*), which was published in 1541 but was probably originally developed at some unknown point after 1170,[3] Galactoire was supposedly martyred by the Goths (Visigoths) at Mimizan in the Landes at a date which is not given but which is usually placed in 507, either just before or just after the decisive battle of Vouillé near Poitiers in the same year where Clovis's Franks defeated Alaric's Goths. To use Thierry Issartel's words, '*Galactorius* y est présenté comme un ami et partisan de Clovis en Novempopulanie, et comme un défenseur résolu de la foi catholique menacée par les wisigoths ariens. Quelques temps avant la bataille de Vouillé (507), *Galactorius* aurait levé et emmené une armée qui aurait été battue et écrasée par les partisans d'Alaric à Mimizan, hors de son diocèse'.[4] Other interpretations have been put forward regarding the precise circumstances of Galactoire's death at the hands of Alaric's Goths south of Bordeaux in the Landes.[5]

The 'Lescar fragment' is clearly a part of a late legend/story and is very similar to Galactoire's legend found in the *Breviary of Lescar*. Galactoire's death could well have been at the hands of Alaric II's Visigoths, but in the sixth century there was no general devastation of the episcopal cities of the Novempopulania (roughly later Gascony), either immediately following the battle of Vouillé in 507 or even later. Furthermore, in the Lescar breviary we find multiple mentions of the history of the Goths and in connection with Galactoire of their coming to Bordeaux and Vascony.[6] But immediately following these, and introduced by the word 'post', in Lesson III of Saint Galactoire's holy offices we find:

> Post, aggrediuntur Gallias, disponentes transire in Hispaniam, patefactis interim montibus Pireneis. Sed dum transitum in Hispaniam attentarent, sepe fines Vasconie invadentes,

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[1] *Ibid*. However Bladé (*ibid*.) was quite wrong to suggest that the *gens Gundalorum* 'désigne évidemment les Normands'; in saying this he is simply following Marca.
[2] *Ibid*., pp. 482-84.
[3] V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar de 1541 : réédité avec des notes de l'abbé Dubarat* (Pau and Paris, 1891), pp. XI, XXIV.
[4] See T. Issartel, 'Les saints évêques de Beneharnum (Lescar) : enjeux religieux et politiques de la mémoire épiscopale dans la souveraineté de Béarn (XVIe - XVIIe siècles)', *Actes du colloque de Tours, 10-12 juin 2010* (2015), pp. 281-300, at pp. 286-87.
[5] V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar*, pp. XXIII-XXVI.
[6] V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar*, pp. 35-36; and also see pp. 37-39.

quia non patebat illis liber transitus, Vasconum illis bellicoso exercitu resistente, Vasconibus occultas insidias paraverunt.[1]

Dubarat says that the clerk who wrote this 'confond les Vandales avec les Goths'.[2] It is clear from his footnote that Dubarat thought we should compare it with Marca's presentation of the Vandals' invasion at the beginning of the fifth century and their destructions throughout Gaul before they crossed the Pyrenees to Spain in 409,[3] and particularly with a famous letter written by Saint Jerome (*Hieronymus*) (d. 420) in 409 to *Agenuchia*, a highborn lady of Gaul - at the time when the Visigoths had accepted a huge ransom to end their siege of Rome but before the Vandal crossing to Spain had happened, or at least before Jerome had heard about it. The letter contains a long complaint of the desolation of all of Gaul since various Germanic tribes had crossed the Rhine three years before, including into 'the provinces of Aquitaine and of the Nine Nations (*Novempopulania*), of Lyons and of Narbonne are with the exception of a few cities one universal scene of desolation',[4] 'Aquitaniae, Nouempopulorum, Lugdunensis & Narbonensis Prouinciae populate sunt cuncta'.[5] When we do compare Saint Jerome's letter of 409 with the third *leçon* of Galactoire in his legend contained in the *Breviary of Lescar* they are clearly some parallels, but even more striking elsewhere in Galactoire's legend we find another office for one of his two feast days which says:

Sanctus Galectorius, presul Lascurrensis, orabat devotius, manibus, protensis. Dum sevit acerbius Rex Vuandalensis.[6]

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 36.
[2] *Ibid*., p. XXIII.
[3] *Ibid*., p. XXIII, n. 2: 'Comparez le récit de l'invasion des Vandales avec le texte de la troisième leçon de St Galactoire'; cf. P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 57.
[4] 'I shall now say a few words of our present miseries. A few of us have hitherto survived them, but this is due not to anything we have done ourselves but to the mercy of the Lord. Savage tribes in countless numbers have overrun all parts of Gaul. The whole country between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the Rhine and the Ocean, has been laid waste by hordes of Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alans, Gepids, Herules, Saxons, Burgundians, Allemanni and - alas! For the commonweal! - even Pannonians. For Assur also is joined with them. The once noble city of Moguntiacum has been captured and destroyed. In its church many thousands have been massacred. The people of Vangium after standing a long siege have been extirpated. The powerful city of Rheims, the Ambiani, the Altrebatæ, the Belgians on the skirts of the world, Tournay, Spires, and Strasburg have fallen to Germany: while the provinces of Aquitaine and of the Nine Nations, of Lyons and of Narbonne are with the exception of a few cities one universal scene of desolation. And those which the sword spares without, famine ravages within. I cannot speak without tears of Toulouse which has been kept from falling hitherto by the merits of its reverend bishop Exuperius. Even the Spains are on the brink of ruin and tremble daily as they recall the invasion of the Cymry; and, while others suffer misfortunes once in actual fact, they suffer them continually in anticipation': Saint Jerome letter to *Agenuchia*: trans. W. H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W. G. Martley, in P. Schaff and H. Wace (eds.), *A select library of Nicene and post-Nicene fathers of the Christian church*, 2nd series, vol. 6 (Buffalo, 1893), no 123.
[5] This is referenced by P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 62, n. III.
[6] V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar*, p. 35.

Here we have a very clear although obscure connection being made between Galactoire and a cruel king of the Vandals, which is a confusion/conflation of events a century apart. But what do we find in the Lescar fragment? Precisely that after Galactoire's death it was the Vandals (*gens Gundalorum*) who made attacks in the Novempopulania.

In my view, therefore, it would seem that the 'Lescar fragment' was most likely written in the same Lescar milieu and quite possibly after or at around the same time as the legend of Galactoire as we first find it in the Lescar breviary; hence after 1170 for sure,[1] but possibly after about 1280 according to Bladé.[2] In regard to Bladé's argument that the part of Bertrand's text referring to the devastation of many cities in Gascony likely derived from the 'Lescar fragment', this would seem to be strengthened by the foregoing.

In summary, we should reject Marca's assertion that the Lescar fragment provides independent support for the story of the destruction all nearly all Gascon episcopal cities by Northmen/Danes (actually, and as mentioned, by *Daphni*) contained in Nicolas Bertrand's pseudo-historical pastiche of 1515.

A devastation of all Gascony after 840?

We can now finally turn our attention back to how Mussot-Goulard proceeds after her mythic year of 840. She says:

> Mais ce fut surtout en 844, que se fit la grande offensive. Double offensive en tenaille [in a pincer movement] cette fois. La Garonne servit de voie de pénétration pour toute la partie nord du pays, et l'Adour pour la zone méridionale. La bataille fut terrible à Bordeaux : le comte de Bordeaux, Seguin, trouva la mort après un siège d'un an. La mort de Seguin est rapportée par Adémar de Chabannes ainsi que par Loup de Ferrières dans une lettre qu'il adressa à Ganelon [Wenilo] à la mi-novembre 845. Le comte de Bordeaux avait encore en main en 845 le titre ducal. Depuis presque cinq ans le pays était devenu la proie des envahisseurs et le comte Sanche demeurait dans la fidélité au roi, attenant de lui et de ses ducs l'élan victorieux qui devait résoudre les conflits gascons. En 845, les Normands ont pris Bordeaux, l'on pillé et sont passés outre après avoir mis à mort le duc. Ils ont saccagé la cité de Bazas, puis ont découvert Lectoure et ses richesses. Raid

[1] *Ibid*.
[2] J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), p. 482.

meurtrier où ils pillèrent, brulèrent, semèrent la terreur, selon une tactique qui leur était habituelle, amplement décrite par les sources ecclésiastiques'[1]

This passage is riddled with errors and misconceptions. Firstly, and once again, the mention of 'five years' before 845 takes us back to the illusory date of 840 for the Northmen's first arrival at Bordeaux and in Gascony. Secondly, the death of *Seguin* certainly occurred in 845, as was described in detail earlier in this work; but *Seguin* died two years before Bordeaux was ever besieged and he was replaced - probably by Pippin II after the 'treaty' he made with Charles the Bald at the abbey of Fleury on the Loire in June 845 - by William the son of Bernard of Septimania and Dhuoda his wife. Thirdly, Bordeaux itself was certainly not taken (*pris*) in 845 after a siege lasting one year, hence having supposedly started in early 844. The city was only first captured in the spring of 848 after a siege that had started in late 847, when according to the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* William was made a prisoner of the Northmen. Implicitly Mussot-Goulard's idea of a one-year siege of Bordeaux in 844 to 845 seems to have come from the *Annals of Saint-Bertin's* report of Northmen going to Toulouse in 844 (passing by Bordeaux) and returning to the area in 845, but nowhere is it said that Bordeaux suffered a year-long siege over this period, this is all Mussot-Goulard's own creation.

But Mussot-Goulard is not yet quite finished with the year 845. She continues by saying that 'un débarquement avait lieu au même moment à Bayonne. De plus, tout au long de l'Adour et de ses affluents',[2] adding in a rather self-serving and very circular manner that, 'La voie de l'Adour correspondait, pour le Sud de la Gascogne à un grand axe de pénétration normande'.[3] This is all pure imagination. Then, whilst admitting that these supposed attacks up the Adour and its *affluents* are not mentioned in any Frankish annals but only in 'les textes locaux', meaning of course primarily the supposed *Charte de Bigorre* of Nicolas Bertrand,[4] she tells us that 'Dax, Aire, Tarbes étaient incendiés, les gaves d'Oloron et Lescar visités. Il ne restait plus qu'Auch et le Comminges en dehors de cette sombre litanie. Saint-Sever, le monastère déjà amoindri, était incendié'.[5]

Also in regard to the trip of the Northmen to Toulouse in 844, Mussot-Goulard says that these Northmen 'pillaient Toulouse, l'ancienne ville de Guillaume,[6] et passaient les Pyrénées

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 97.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 97, n. 32.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[6] William of Gellone (*c.*755 - 28 May 812 or 814), he was count of Toulouse, duke of Aquitaine and marquis of Septimania in the 790s, and the father of Bernard of Septimania.

pour se rendre jusqu'à Pampelune'.[1] Whether these Northmen actually took and pillaged Toulouse in 844 is debatable. As was seen in Chapter 3, the only very weak evidence that Toulouse was really captured comes from Ermentarius's *Miracles of Saint Philibert* which lists Toulouse as one of the many towns 'taken' by the Northmen over many years, which it certainly was not in 864. More staggering by far is the statement that these Northmen then made a trek across the Pyrenees to Pamplona. Mussot-Goulard bases this astonishing statement solely (she actually says) on the opinions of two Spanish historians: Pascual de Gayangos in 1843 and J. M. Lacarra in 1972, who she says have demonstrated 'le passage des Normands en Espagne par l'Adour' in 844.[2] But actually neither of these two Spanish historians writing more than a century apart say anything of the sort which one can see by reading the pages referenced by Mussot-Goulard; it is all either a complete misreading of these authors or just a tendentious invention on her part. In fact, the only potential Scandinavian raid reaching Pamplona happened, if it ever really did, in *c*.859, as reported in one late Arabic source.[3] Regarding the first expedition to the Iberian Peninsula in 844, we know a reasonable amount about this from various Frankish, Christian Spanish and Muslim sources, and it went from Toulouse via the coasts of Christian northern Iberia to Muslim Andalusia and not via the Adour and Pamplona.[4]

We then move forward a couple of years to the year 848. Mussot-Goulard mentions William 'désormais duc à Bordeaux'[5] and the arrival of Charles the Bald in the area in early 848, plus the fall of Bordeaux to the Northmen slightly thereafter when William was made a prisoner.[6] She interprets Charles's capture of nine Scandinavian ships on the Dordogne as a great victory, which it was not. But in regard to the Northmen involved in the siege of Bordeaux, these *Normand*s 'étaient arrivés, dans la vallée de la Garonne et dans celle de l'Adour'.[7] First of all that the Northmen involved had arrived in the valley of the Garonne is a statement of the obvious because the wide Gironde, where Bordeaux is situated, forms the point of entry into the Garonne. But I would guess that Mussot-Goulard more means those Northmen who had

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 98.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 98. n. 35. Mussot-Goulard references P. de Gayangos, *The history of the Mohammedan dynasties in Spain*, vol. 2 (London, 1843), p. 435, and J. M. Lacarra, *Historia politica del reino de Navarra desde sus origenes hasta su incorporacion a Castilla*, vol. 1 (Pamplona, 1972), with no page reference but see p. 63.
[3] Cf. A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 47-64, who concludes (p. 64) that the Northmen 'almost certainly passed by Pamplona without collecting 70,000 dinars'; S. M. Pons-Sanz, 'The Basque country and the Vikings during the ninth century'.
[4] See for example A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 29-45.
[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 98, with which I agree, and for which see Chapter 3. This William was the one captured by the Northmen at Bordeaux in 848 who was undoubtedly the son of Bernard of Septimania and his wife Dhuoda.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 98 and nn. 41, 42.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 98.

gone to Toulouse in 844, to which she adds, as usual, some who had entered the Adour, supposedly first in 840 but again in 844 when as one part of the imagined 'double offensive' they supposedly attacked many places in southern Gascony. But Mussot-Goulard's whole presentation is lacking in clarity as to who these Northmen really were and the chronology of their movements.

As time progresses things get even worse. After stating that, 'Leur [the Northmen's] pression fut presque constante dans les estuaires de la Gironde et de l'Adour. Bordeaux et Bayonne avaient pour eux une particulière attirance. Ils s'y installèrent par périodes',[1] Mussot-Goulard then states that in 851 'de Bordeaux ils sillonnaient le littoral atlantique'.[2] Here she again explicitly references the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* which, whether deliberately or not, she only partially quotes, leaving out the fact that this chronicle refers to 851 as the time when Oskar's Northmen came back to the Seine. Mussot-Goulard is suggesting that *in 851*, or maybe even just before this, these Northmen who returned to the Seine in October of 851 had attacked the Atlantic littoral. Yet the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* upon which her suggestion is based says no such thing. The activities of Oskar's Northmen between 841 and 851 had certainly involved Aquitaine including the siege and capture of Bordeaux in 847-48, but the year 851 refers to the Seine and cannot and should not be used to suggest a Scandinavian presence at Bordeaux in this year, from where the Northmen 'sillonnaient le littoral atlantique'.

Chapter 3 discussed where Oskar's Northmen might have gone after we hear of them attacking Périgueux in the spring of 849, and before their arrival on the Seine in October 851. From a strictly chronological point of view it is not impossible that they had indeed gone back to Bordeaux for a short while, a city which they had captured and pillaged in early 848 after much effort, before heading off for the Seine. Yet it should be mentioned here that the core of Mussot-Goulard's telling of 851 is clearly derived originally from Pierre de Marca, who after mentioning the capture of Bordeaux in 848[3] says that 'en suite [the Northmen] pillèrent le Bourg de Medoc, qui est peut-estre celui de Teste de Buchs'[4] (referencing the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* and *l'ancienne Chronique des Normans*).[5] Actually, this pillage of a 'bourg' in 848 was of the town (*vicus*) of Melle (*Mettalum*) in Deux-Sèvres, Poitou. But Marca makes *Mettalum* mean *Médoc* in the *pays de Buch* around the *Bassin d'Arcachon* on the Atlantic coast south-west of

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 192. Before this he says that the Northmen had ruined the Île de Ré and ravaged the towns of Saintes, Angoulême, Limoges and Périgueux, but for the truth (or otherwise) of this and for the chronology of all these events see earlier chapters.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] No doubt again meaning the *Chronicon de Gestis Normannorum in Francia*.

Bordeaux in northern Gascon Landes, and more specifically on the south side of the bay at La Teste-de-Buch.[1] Then, based on this mistaken localisation of *Mettalum* (Melle), he continues even more fabulously: 'Ces Payens s'establirent puissament en cette ville [La Teste-de-Buch], sous leur Duc & General *Hoseri*, qu'ils la possédèrent long-temps comme une retraite, et un port asseuré pour eux, & pour leur armée navale; d'où ils faisoient en suite leurs depredations, par toutes les Provinces de France. Et particulierment en l'année 851. Ayans demaré de Bourdeaux des le commencement d'Octobre, ils enterent dans la riviere de Seine & revindrent au mois de Juin ensuivant, chargé de butin, & de despoüilles.'[2] This is clearly from where Mussot-Goulard got her ideas about 851,[3] although she shifts the Northmen's 'long-term' base from the *Bassin d'Arcachon* to the river Adour and Bayonne, although we might add that elsewhere she says there was a *raid normand* into Gascony in 820, indeed into the *pays de* 'Born'[4] which lies immediately to the south of the *pays de Buch*; but this raid of 820 was really on the island of Bouin in the more northerly bay of Bourgneuf.[5]

After 851 Mussot-Goulard says that 'après une interruption ils [the Northmen] y revinrent [to Bordeaux] en 855'.[6] This is true, but the second attack on Bordeaux in 855 happened *after* the Northmen had returned from the Seine to Aquitaine in the autumn of 852 and fought a battle at Brillac, and their subsequent activities there; they had not stayed at Bordeaux or anywhere in more southerly Gascony in these years.

We then jump to the year 859, when Mussot-Goulard says that in this year the Northmen 'remontaient l'Adour, pillaient Bayonne, passaient les Pyrénées et demandaient, pour relâcher Garsie de Pampelune, leur captif, un *vergeld* [*sic*] de 70 000 dinars'.[7] This supposed (second!) incursion to Pamplona in *c*.859 was discussed briefly earlier. Even if this incursion ever really happened, which is highly debatable, it was not with any certainty made from the Adour or

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[1] For the geography of the *pagus* of Buch see F. Labatut, 'Les caractères originaux du pays du Buch', *Bulletin de la Société Historique et Archéologique d'Arcachon et du pays de Buch*, 93 (1997), pp. 1-20. Actually, the *pays de Médoc* lies immediately to the north of Buch, almost stretching up to the mouth of the Gironde.

[2] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 192. After this P. de Marca tells of how Gascony was not spared and how all its towns were entirely pillaged and sacked (to which we will come shortly), as they already had been during the first raids in 841!

[3] Others use 851 as well. J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 23 (1896), p. 17, fell into the same trap as Mussot-Goulard, and maybe the latter took her idea from Bladé as well, or at least found support therein: 'Cette année […] (851), les Normands s'étaient une fois de plus emparés de Bordeaux, d'où ils dirigeaient des incursions dans l'intérieur de notre Sud-Ouest.'

[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 89 and n. 157.

[5] As described in Chapter 2.

[6] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 100.

[7] *Ibid*., pp. 100-1. Although Mussot-Goulard was a native of Gascony, but not of Bayonne, it would have made no sense at all to use the river Adour from Bayonne to go to Pamplona. It would have been much better to go a little way up the river Nive, or use the Roman road which followed it, and then go over the Pyrenees via the pass at Roncevaux - where Charlemagne's rearguard under Roland was ambushed by the *Vascones* in 778 when returning from Pamplona - or even to have used the route via Ainhoa a little further to the west.

following another pillage of Bayonne. This is all just wishful thinking on Mussot-Goulard's part. Elsewhere she even links this campaign to Pamplona in Navarre with the attack made by the Northmen and Pippin II in 857. She says, without mentioning the very important fact that this attack was actually on Poitiers far to the north: 'En 857 Pépin II nouait ouvertement une alliance avec les Normands et bientôt avec Robert et les Bretons.[1] Malgré les efforts de Charles l'Enfant qui ralliait les Aquitains,[2] le Sud de la Gascogne était de nouveau un repaire normand d'où d'audacieuses campagnes étaient lancées vers la *Francia*, vers la Navarre.'[3] So once again the purported campaign to Pamplona originated from southern Gascony (indeed from Bayonne via the Adour); but also after 857 the Northmen's *repaire* in the south of Gascony was from where they launched subsequent audacious raids into *Francia*. I do not know whether *Francia* here means Francia in the limited sense of north of the Seine or its later more general sense of north of the Loire including Neustria, in either case it makes no sense. The Northmen were absent from the Loire and Aquitaine between 858 and late 861/early 862 because they were in Iberia and the Mediterranean. In Neustria and Francia (in its more limited sense) it is somewhat difficult to place any of the Scandinavian activities in these areas after 857 as originating in southern Gascony. Sidroc had arrived back on the Seine in 856 and left in 857.[4] Bjørn had arrived a little later in the same year and was still operating on the Seine until at least the spring of 858. Weland only arrived in Flanders in 859 and was still on the Seine until early 862 when he left for southern Brittany/the Loire before being killed in a duel at Nevers in late 863. Thus, where is there any space for Northmen coming from southerly Gascony undertaking 'campaigns' in *Francia* after 857 or even after 859?

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[1] See *AB* 857, 859: ed. Grat, pp. 74, 81; trans. Nelson, pp. 84, 90.

[2] This is a complete assumption and probably not at all true; for which see Chapter 4.

[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 101. Notice the similarly between Mussot-Goulard's view that it was from Gascony that the Northmen launched attacks 'vers la *Francia*', and Pierre de Marca's statement that it was from Gascony (here from his imagined base at La Teste-de-Buch) that 'ils faisoient en suite leurs depredations, par toutes les Provinces de France' (P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 192).

[4] In Chapters 4 and 5 Sidroc's activities on the Seine and the Loire in the 850s were analysed. We do not know where he went after 857. It is not chronologically impossible that he went from the Seine to Aquitaine, but there is not the slightest hard evidence that this was the case. As noted in Chapter 4, Ferdinand Lot suggested that Sidroc may be one of the two (or three?) Danish chieftains of the same name who appear in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in England in 871; this cannot be proved but given the clear equivalence of the names it is at least possible, although if correct we do not know what he had been doing in the intervening years. On the other hand making this Sidroc the same person as the chieftain Sigfrid (*Sigefrido*) who was in command of the Northmen on the Charente in 865 according to Hincmar in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, and even the Sigfrid (*Sigefridus*) who was one of the primary leaders of the Northmen of the 'Great Army' in northern Francia and who came to help with the siege of Paris in the mid-880s, as Joël Supéry does, is complete fantasy; see for example J. Supéry, *La Saga des Vikings*, pp. 73-75, 131, 148-51.

Mussot-Goulard's attention then shifts to the 860s. After erroneously stating that 'en effet, de 850 à 864, il y eut trois grandes manifestations des Normands en Gascogne',[1] she then homes in on this particular year of 864: 'L'année 864 marqua un déchainement général des Normands en Gascogne, guidés par Pépin II.'[2] She then adds the question, 'Sanche a-t-il péri en combattant contre eux ou est-ce son décès qui a permis aux Normands de pénétrer avec une telle violence ?'.[3]

We then find the statement, 'La Gascogne fut alors largement parcourue par les Normands, au point que les reliques des corps saints furent transportées en d'autres régions : les reliques de Sainte-Foy quittèrent Agen, dans la vallée de la Garonne pour chercher refuge à Conques en Auvergne. Les reliques de Sainte-Fauste furent enlevées de Vic-Fezensac et emportées près de Brive, au prieuré d'Arnac'.[4] This is a most reductionist presentation of the highly complex dossiers concerning these two translations.

In regard to the 'furtive' theft of the relics of Sainte Foy from Agen on the banks of the Garonne as reported in the eleventh-century *Translatio sanctae Fidei*,[5] even if it took place in January of 865 or 866 as both Ferdinand Lot and Léon Levillain suggested,[6] it had probably nothing at all to do with any attack on the town, or even a 'fear' that the Northmen might arrive there.[7] Even if we accept Lot's and Levillain's dates for the removal of Sainte Foy's relics from Agen, based as they both are on a belief in these eleventh-century texts, and who both assume that this was prompted by the Northmen which neither the verse nor the prose versions of the

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 101. Where '850' comes from is unclear; and what about the *manifestations* of the Northmen from the year 840 onwards?

[2] As has been explored in Chapter 6, Pippin II had certainly accompanied the Northmen to Toulouse in early 864, but that this was 'un déchainement général des Normands en Gascogne guidés par Pépin II' must be doubted. This was an erroneous idea put forward by Léon Levillain.

[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 101. This is a good question because Sancho Sanchez was succeeded by his nephew Arnald, the son of the count of Périgueux Immo. In my view Sancho Sanchez had died before 864, possibly not too long after 851.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] *Translatio sanctae Fidei*, *AA, SS*, Octobris III (Paris, 1868), verse *translatio*, pp. 289-92, prose *translatio*, pp. 294-99.

[6] F. Lot, 'Sur la date de la translation des reliques de Sainte Foi d'Agen à Conques', *Annales du Midi : revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 16. 64 (1904), pp. 502-8; L. Levillain, 'Notes sur l'abbaye de Conques', *Revue Mabillon*, 3 (1907), pp. 99-115, at pp. 106-14. For which see also P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 138-40. J. Angély, 'La prétendue tumulation de Sainte Foy d'Agen à Conques', *Revue de l'Agenais: Bulletin de la societé académique d'Agen*, 25 (1950), pp. 91-102; *idem*, *La passion de Sainte Foy* (Agen, 1956), argued that the entire story is a fabrication, for which see also the evaluation of P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 59-60, 140-41.

[7] For a thorough discussion of this 'theft' of relics see P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 58-63, Appendix A, pp. 138-41.

Translatio sanctae Fidei actually say, what we cannot do as Mussot-Goulard does is place this removal in *c*.864 because: 'La Gascogne fut alors largement parcourue par les Normands.'

In the case of the relics of Sainte Faustae we read in the *Translatio sanctae Faustae* about how at some point prior to 864[1] Arnald (the son of Immo the count of Périgord, and from *c*.864 the successor to the *ducatus* of the Gascons following the death of Count Sancho Sanchez)[2] gave permission to or instructed the monks of Solignac in the Limousin to go south to the parts of Gascony that he ruled (*ut partes Gasconiae quas regebat*) to look for holy relics with which to endow the monastery of Solignac. 'Two persons were chosen for the mission, a priest named Aldarius and a nephew of the duke, Godfrid (*Gotafridus*).'[3] They set off into Gascony and travelled far and wide looking in many places for holy relics, but completely without success. But eventually they came to Vic-Fezensac (*Fidenciaco*, dep. Gers) and found a church there dedicated to Sainte Faustae the Virgin and Martyr, in which were kept the relics of this martyr. This church, we are told, had at some unstated point in the past been burned by pagans (*paganis combusta fuerat*).[4] The supposed destruction of this church had, when we read the text closely and examine its historical context, most likely happened, if it really had, at some point *before* 864, possibly in *c*.855 when: 'The Northmen attacked Bordeaux, a *civitas* in Aquitaine, and moved about all over the countryside at will'[5], or in 848-849 after the capture of Bordeaux, or even in 844 when the Northmen sailing up the Garonne to Toulouse had wreaked 'destruction everywhere without meeting any opposition',[6] or in later 844 or 845 when some of the Northmen who had been at Toulouse had remained in Aquitaine before returning to the Saintonge.[7] In any case, after stealing these relics one night the two men hurried back to the Limousin where, after many miracles along the way, they eventually placed the remains in a

[1] The whole content and context of this story points to a date of before 864 because Solignac was probably destroyed by the Northmen in 863; see the note below.
[2] For which see *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727.
[3] P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, p. 142. For the family relations of Arnald, Immo, Duke Godfrid and others see in the first instance S. Fray, *L'aristocratie laïque*, pp. 1139-45. Clearly Arnald's authority or influence over the monastery of Solignac came from his membership of this family and not from his succession to the *ducatus* of the Gascons, based as it may or may not have been at Vic-Fezensac. One cannot be as sure as L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, p. 353, n. 67, who says that: 'Il suit de la *Translatio* qu'Arnaud était maître du Fezensac.' Even if he had become such in 864 on the death of his father-in-law Sancho, then, at least according to the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, he had clearly not had any knowledge of the remains of Sainte Faustae being at Fezensac when he instructed the monks of Solignac to go and search for holy relics because it was only after long and unsuccessful searches that Aldarius and Godfrid finally arrived there.
[4] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), pp. 1090-1092; (Paris, 1863), pp. 727-28.
[5] *AB* 855: trans. Nelson, p. 78.
[6] *AB* 844: trans. Nelson, p. 60.
[7] *AB* 845: trans. Nelson, p. 62. For some of these options see S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 18-19, 43. See also P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 83, 123, 131, Appendix A, pp. 141-45.

priory of Solignac at Brivezac (dep. Corrèze).[1] That the relics were taken to the priory of Brivezac and not to the mother monastery at Solignac can only be because the latter had been destroyed by the Northmen in 863.[2] Their arrival at Brivezac may have been in 864 but it might have even been later.[3]

The point of all this is that we cannot just assume as Mussot-Goulard does that the church at Vic-Fezensac had been burned by the Northmen in 864 and that Sainte Fausta's relics were stolen (later) the same year.

Then we are also told by Mussot-Goulard that in 864, yet again, 'Bordeaux fut abandonné par son archévêque, Frotaire, qui s'installa à Poitiers, puis, se jugeant de nouveau en danger, remonta jusqu'à Bourges, avec l'accord du roi'.[4] The date of, and the reasons for, Archbishop Frotar's transfer from Bordeaux to Bourges were discussed at some length in Chapter 7. Frotar probably did not leave Bordeaux until early 876 and his transfer to Bourges (even if briefly via Poitiers) was most unlikely connected with any real infestation of Northmen in the area of Bordeaux at this time and certainly not with any subsequent Scandinavian threat to Poitiers. But in any case, dating his (Frotar's) 'abandonment' of Bordeaux to the year 864 is completely arbitrary, tendentious, and at the end of the day quite simply wrong.

Furthermore, it was supposedly because of the presence of Northmen in Gascony, in 864 yet again,[5] that 'les voyageurs de Paris à Saragosse évitaient la traversée de la Gascogne'.[6] Mussot-Goulard adds that 'les deux moines parisiens choisirent les cols pyrénéens les plus orientaux',[7] and also that it was the presence of Northmen in Gascony that was the reason why 'l'abbé de Conques, lui-même, suivait le chemin catalan pour revenir de Navarre'.[8] These statements are a complete misunderstanding of the chronology, itineraries and context of Aimoin of Saint-Germain's two related works, the *Translatio Beati Vincentii* and the *Translatio Georgii, Aurelii et Nathaliae*,[9] and they also contain a number of incorrect 'facts'. Just by way of example, the

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[1] *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), pp. 1091-1092; (Paris, 1863), pp. 727-28; P. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, p. 142.
[2] As was discussed in Chapter 6 and as also told of in the *Translatio sanctae Faustae*, *AA*, *SS*, Ianuarii I (Antwerp, 1643), p. 1091; (Paris, 1863), p. 727.
[3] For a full discussion of this 'furtive' theft, and different views about it, see P. Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp. 141-45.
[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 101.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 101, n. 76.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 101.
[9] Aimoin of Saint-Germain, *De translatione SS. Martyrum Georgii monachi, Aurelii et Nathaliae ex urbe Corduba Parisios*, *PL*, 115, ed. Migne, cols. 939-60; *De translatione sanctorum Georgii monachi, Aurelii et Nathaliae*, *AA, SS*, Iulii VI (Paris, 1868), pp. 459-69 [hereafter *TGA*]; *idem*, *Translatio Beati Vincentii in Monasterium Castrense* [hereafter *TBV*], *PL*, 126, ed. Migne, cols. 1101-24 also found in *Translatio sancti Vincentii*, ed. J. Mabillon, *AA, SS, OSB,* IV.1. A very partial résumé (rather than a translation which it is not) of the *Translatio Beati Vincentii* can be found in L. Barbaza, *Annales de la ville de Castres* (Castres, 1886), pp. 13-33, but as remarked in an earlier

voyage of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés monk Usuard and the lay brother Odilard took place in 857-58 and not in 864,[1] and that they went to Saragossa by 'les cols pyrénéens les plus orientaux' was because they had travelled down the Rhône to Uzès (dep. Gard) and then gone to Barcelona before going on to Saragossa, and from there to Cordoba, and not because of any activities of the Northmen in Gascony.[2] Also the abbot of Conques (dep. Aveyron), who was actually called Blandin, did not accompany the monk Audaldus on his quest for the relics of Saint Vincent. Audaldus was first accompanied by his friend and fellow monk Hildebertus, who had had the initial vision of where the body of Saint Vincent was to be found, and by two lay brothers. But Hildebertus fell ill *en route* and Audaldus continued alone with only a dumb lay brother for company.[3] More important is that this journey to Valencia happened in 855 according to Aimoin,[4] and after Audaldus had returned to Saragossa and been deprived of the bones of Saint Vincent by Bishop Senior, who horribly tortured him - including hanging him up by his testicles - he then immediately returned to Conques where he was first taken as an 'imposteur et un vagabond'.[5] There is no hint in the *Translatio Beati Vincentii* that he 'suivait le chemin catalan pour revenir de Navarre', which here means from Saragossa which was not in any case in Navarre, to Conques to avoid Northmen in Gascony, although it is certainly possible that Audaldus had preferred a more easterly route across the Pyrenees to avoid a crossing of the *Hautes-Pyrénées*.[6] Thus tremendously fascinating as both these much neglected

chapter it completely redacts out all the chapters involving the Northmen and almost all other non-hagiographical events. On Aimoin's *Translation of Saint-Vincent* see L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent de Sarragosse', *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, 13, no. 60 (1927), pp. 307-58; and on his *Translations of SS George, Aurelius and Nathalie* see J. C. Lara Olmo, 'El relato del traslado de los santos mártires Jorge, Aurelio y Natalia: un valioso escrito hagiográfico y documental histórico de mediados del siglo IX', *Hispania sacra*, 51. 103 (1999), pp. 55-89, which includes a very good Spanish translation of the fifteen chapters of the prologue at pp. 81-89; A. Christys, 'St-Germain des-Prés, St Vincent and the martyrs of Cordoba', *Early Medieval Europe*, 7. 2 (1998), pp. 199-216; J. Dubois, *Le martyrologe d'Usuard: texte et commentaire*, *Subsidia hagiographica*, 40 (Brussels, 1965); J. L. Nelson, 'The Franks, the Martyrology of Usuard, and the Martyrs of Cordoba', *Studies in Church History*, 30 (1993), pp. 67-80.

[1] A. Christys, 'St-Germain des-Prés', pp. 202-4; L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent', p. 336. They were back at Esmans (dep. Seine-et-Maine) by October of 858, for which see *AB* 858: ed. Grat, p. 79; trans. Nelson, p. 89.

[2] For the outward itinerary see A. Christys, 'St-Germain des-Prés', pp. 202-4. L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent', pp. 336-37.

[3] *TBV*, book 1, c. 3, cols. 1013-14; L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent', p. 338; L. Barbaza, *Annales de la ville de Castres*, pp. 14-15.

[4] *TBV*, book 1, c. 1, col. 1013; A. Christys, 'St-Germain des-Prés', pp. 213-14 ; L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent', p. 338.

[5] L. de Lacger, 'Saint Vincent', pp. 339-40.

[6] If Audaldus's return to Conques can be dated to *c.*855 then the only Northmen operating in the southwest of France/Gaul at this time were those making attacks in the Saintonge and on Bordeaux and not anywhere near the Pyrenees.

translations certainly are there is nothing in either of them that supports a threatening Scandinavian presence in Gascony in *c*.864 or even before this.[1]

In *Les princes de Gascogne* after 864 we hear nothing more of any substance concerning the Northmen in Gascony in the latter part of the ninth century or even early in the tenth century except for some perfunctory lines about the legend of the martyrdom of 'Saint Léon' at Bayonne. Mussot-Goulard believes the basic historical veracity of this legend but she would place the events described in the two late versions of the legend in the early years of the tenth century rather than in 890 as is often done .[2]

The *Historia Abbatiae Condomiensis*

We should also examine the initial part of a short pseudo-historical compilation found at the beginning of a fourteenth-century manuscript of a *Cartulaire de Condom* which is now usually called, in its totality, the *Historia Abbatiae Condomiensis* (*The History of the Abbots of Condom*).[3]

The first few pages of this manuscript Mussot-Goulard calls the *Historia Monasteria Condomiensis*, which after the passage we will examine below contains a short description of the foundation of the church of Condom and a short *Gesta* of the early *ducs* of Gascony.[4] Mussot-Goulard would date this so-called *Historia Monasteria Condomiensis* to around 1020,[5]

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[1] It could well be that Mussot-Goulard knew full well that these two 'translations' written by Aimoin of Saint-Germain referred to the 850s and not to 864; nevertheless, she clearly places them in this later year. As an aside, A. Christys, 'St-Germain des-Prés', p. 202, observes: 'On his way to Spain Usuard probably followed the *strata francisca* which connected Septimania and Barcelona. He had to return by a longer way because the pass was closed by bandits.' This suggestion may have come from a passage in the *Translatio Georgii, Aurelii et Nathaliae* which describes how when at Saragossa Usuard was very concerned to only return via roads and passes which were garrisoned and could ensure his safety, and he particularly did not want to venture into any passes where there were '*exclusas*'; see *TGA*, chap. 15, cols. 947-48. For these *exclusas* see J. C. Lara Olmo, 'El relato del traslado de los santos mártires Jorge, Aurelio y Natalia', p. 88 and n. 126; for our purposes the point is that they were certainly not Northmen. In recent personal correspondence on this matter Christys says: 'I wrote this paper when I was starting out on my research [...], I can't discover where I got this information, [...] so I assume that it could well be incorrect. Perhaps I was thinking of the bandits who changed Eulogius' travel plans (letter to Wiliesindus of 851, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum* II, p. 497).'

[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 102, n. 84, p. 109, p. 32. I hope to return to the legend of Saint Léon of Bayonne in the future. There is an extensive (though generally old) literature on this subject, and Mussot-Goulard even wrote a short (and highly debatable) article on the subject: R. Mussot-Goulard, 'Saint-Léon, Bayonne et la Gascogne à la fin du IXe siècle', in R. Mussot-Goulard and P. Hourmat (eds.), *Saint-Léon de Bayonne*, *Publication de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne* (Bayonne, 1994), pp. 34-35.

[3] BNF, MS Latin 5652. This was edited and published under the title *Historia Abbatiae Condomiensis* by Luc d'Achery in *Spicilegium sive collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum*, vol. 2 (1723), pp. 580-602, and by also by Oihénhart. This *History of the Abbots of Condom* in also discussed in some detail in Chapter 15,

[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 18. See also R. Mussot-Goulard, 'Mémoire, tradition, histoire, en Gascogne au début du Xle siècle', in *Actes des congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, 13e congrès*, *Aix-en-Provence* (1982), pp. 141-56.

[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 18, 23, 97 n. 26.

although her reasoning for this is rather weak.[1] The opening passage which concerns us here reads:[2]

> Post mortem enim Lodovici[3] Pii, ejus inter se dissidentibus filiis & intestina clade certantibus, gentes perfidæ & cultibus adhuc dæmonam irretitæ, Sclavorum videlicet, Normannorum atque Hunnorum,[4] occasione accepta, suæ claustra habitationis irrupterunt, & per intervalla temporum sibimet succedentes non nullas Galliæ provincias invaserunt, cædibus & rapinis, ferro & flammis universa vastantes. Porro Normannorum perfidiam tanto amplius experti sunt Aquitani & Guascones,[5] quanto semper Deum ad iracundiam provocaverunt peccantes. Nam urbes eorum potentissimæ tunc desolatæ sunt, oppida subversa sunt, loca populosa ad erenum redacta sunt, & habitacula Deo sacrata, juxta illud Pfalmistæ, *in pomorum custodiam posita sunt*.[6]

Mussot-Goulard translates this as given below, but I will have more to say about her translation immediately afterwards:

> En effet, après la mort de Louis le Pieux, ses fils se querellant et se livrant une guerre intestine, des peuples perfides, voués au culte des démons, à savoir les Danois [*sic* = Slavs], les Normands et les Huns, saissant l'occasion, sortirent de leurs résidences et à plusieurs reprises, envahirent diverses provinces de Gaule, dévastant tout par le fer et le feu, le vol et le pillage. Aquitains et Gascons connurent amplement la perfidie des Normands parce que, par leur péché, ils avaient attiré la colère de Dieu. Leurs villes puissantes sont désolées, leurs *oppida* démantelés, leurs lieux habités retournés au désert et les sanctuaires de Dieu, selon la parole du psalmiste *ne sont plus voués qu'à la garde des vergers*.[7]

As the text says this is concerned with the troubles in the Frankish realm following Louis the Pious's death (in 840) when his sons started to fight among themselves for Louis's imperial

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[1] I will discuss this point more in a later chapter.
[2] L. d'Achery, *Spicilegium*, vol. 2, pp. 580-81. Cf. L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 11. The modern punctuations added by d'Achery and Brugèles differ slightly.
[3] L. d'Achery has 'Lodoici'; perhaps this is just a printing error.
[4] L.-C. Brugèles, *ibid.*, punctuates this as 'dæmonium irretitæ Sclavorum, videlicet, Normannorum atque Hunnorum', which might perhaps suggest that these Slavs are being specified, '*videlicet*', as Northmen and Hungarians. D'Archery's punctuation, given here and followed by Mussot-Goulard, might seem to suggest that *videlicet* ('namely') only refers to the Slavs. But given that the subject of the sentence is plural I think we just have here a list of three different perfidious peoples each dedicated to the cult of 'demons': the Slavs, the Northmen and the Hungarians.
[5] L.-C. Brugèles, *ibid.*, has '*Vascones*'.
[6] L. d'Achery italicises this phrase taken from Psalm 78.1.
[7] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Histoire de Condom. 1, Des origines à 1317* (Marsolan, Lectoure, 1988), p. 59.

inheritance. We are first told about pagan 'Slavs', to which the author of this text then adds the 'Northmen and Huns [Hungarians]'. The mention of Slavs is clearly taken from an earlier source which I suggest may have been Prudentius of Troyes' part of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*. Prudentius mentions the many invasions of and fights with the Slavs (who he always names as *Sclauos*, that is Sclavos, and *Sclauorum*/Sclavorum) in the years after Louis's death, in fact, from 844 to 855,[1] and even from the year before his death, that is in 839.[2] Significantly, most of these mentions of Slavs are found in very close proximity to reports of the troubles caused by the Northmen or *Dani* in Gaul and in Aquitaine in the same years. In regard to the Huns/Hungarians of the Condom text, the first mention of a Hungarian attack on the Frankish realm is also found in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* in 862, and once again cheek by jowl with the report of a Danish attack on the realm of Louis the Pious's son Louis the German: 'Dani magnam regni eius partem cede igni uastantes prædantur. Sed et hostes antes illis populis inexperti qui Vngri uocantur regnum eius depopulantur',[3] 'The Danes plundered and laid waste a great part of his [Louis the German's] kingdom with fire and sword. Also, enemies called Hungarians, hitherto unknown to these peoples ravaged his realm.'[4]

Furthermore, in the Condom text the mention of the Slavs, the Northmen and the Hungarians, who 'per intervalla temporum sibimet succedentes non nullas Galliæ provincias invaserunt, cædibus & rapinis, ferro & flammis universa vastantes' does rather resemble Prudentius's Danes, who 'eius partem cede et igni uastentes prædantur', and the Hungarians ravaging Louis's realm: 'regnum eius depopulantur.' Then we are told that: 'Porro[5] Normannorum perfidiam tanto amplius experti sunt Aquitani & Guascones, quanto semper Deum ad iracundiam provocaverunt peccantes.' Prudentius's report for 844 is perhaps particularly relevant here. After mentioning Louis the German's attack on the Slavs,[6] Prudentius later tells us that: 'The Northmen sailed up the Garonne as far as Toulouse, wreaking destruction everywhere, without meeting any opposition',[7] 'Nordomanni per Garonnam Tolosam usque

[1] See *AB* 844, 845, 846, 847, 850, 853, 855: trans. Nelson, pp. 59, 61, 63, 65, 68, 77, 81. In the East Frankish *Annals of Fulda* on the other hand the various mentions of Slavs in these years are, with one exception (*s.a.* 846), always referred to by their tribal names: Abodrites, Bohemians, Bulgarians, Daleminzi, Linones, Moravians, Siusli, Sorbs.
[2] *AB* 839: ed. Grat, p. 34; trans. Nelson, p. 46.
[3] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 93.
[4] *AB* 862: trans. Nelson, p. 102.
[5] Whether *porro* here means 'further/other' or 'later' might be debated, but it clearly refers to Northmen in Aquitaine and Gascony sometime after Louis the Pious's death. Whether this might relate to 844-45 (which is the most likely), 848, 855 or even 864 is unclear. Whoever wrote this passage, even if it was as early as the eleventh century as Mussot-Goulard claims, seems to have had no precise idea where to place it, which is as we might expect from someone writing centuries after the events.
[6] *AB* 844: ed. Grat, p. 48; trans. Nelson, p. 59.
[7] *AB* 844: trans. Nelson, p. 60.

proficiscentes, praedas passim inpuneque perficiunt';[1] hence this 'wreaking destruction everywhere' along the Garonne, which was indeed the general 'frontier' of Aquitaine north of the Garonne and Gascony south of the river, is reflected I think in this line of the Condom text. I also believe that it was these reports *s.a.* 844 that led Brugèles to date the Condom text's mention of *this* advent of the Northmen in Aquitaine and Gascony precisely to the year 844.[2] In one sense this is right, not because this part of the Condom text has anything of independent historical value to tell us but rather because the year 844 really was the first time the Northmen could have made raids in Gascony south of the Garonne.

Mussot-Goulard's treatment of this Condom text, in which she vehemently believes, is rather peculiar. She redacts the text in two different ways in her footnotes, not mentioning on either occasion that she has done so, nor giving any reason why.

First, the Condom text's 'dæmonum irretitæ Sclavorum videlicet, Normannorum atque Hunnorum […]'[3] becomes in Mussot-Goulard's version just 'demonum irretitae … Normannorum videlicet', thus leaving out any mention of the Slavs or the Hungarians.[4] Then in the next footnote the text is actually changed to read: 'demonum irretitae, Danorum videlicet …',[5] when in fact the Condom text nowhere even mentions 'Danes', who here replace the Condom text's Slavs. In a later work entitled *Histoire de Condom*, as quoted above, Mussot-Goulard translates this text as 'des peuples perfides voués au culte des démons, à savoir les Danois, les Normands et les Huns […]'.[6] Here she brings the Huns [*sic*] back in but for no apparent reason again makes the text's Slavs (*Sclavos/Sclavorum*) mean *les Danois*. It all seems a little strange, somewhat contrived even.

But Mussot-Goulard then says: 'Ce récit, rédigé au début du XIe siècle, porte la marque des combats plus récents contre les Normands (Taller, 981), il a cependant gardé la tradition locale du développement des incursions normandes en rapport avec les troubles intérieurs, dynastiques, sur le plan de l'opposition de Charles le Chauve et de Pépin II, comme sur celui des conflits propres à la Gascogne.'[7] We will address in Chapter 15 the rather legendary 'Battle

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[1] *AB* 844: ed. Grat, p. 49.
[2] Cf. L.-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, proofs of part 1, p. 11. Bladé's presentation of the Northmen's activities in the years 844 to 848 is in great part wrong, particularly as he places all the destructions/raids which happened in the early to mid-860s in either 844 or 848: J.-F. Bladé, 'Les comtes carolingiens de Bigorre', 22 (1895), pp. 406-9.
[3] This is Luc d'Achery's punctuation.
[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 96, n. 25.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 97, n. 26.
[6] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Histoire de Condom*, p. 59. For a quite critical review of this whole work see A. Dierkens, 'Mussot-Goulard (Renée). *Histoire de Condom*, t. I : *Des origines à 1317*', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 70. 2 (1992), pp. 587-88.
[7] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 97, n. 26.

of Taller', which reputedly took place in the Landes of Gascony in the late tenth century where the Northmen are meant to have suffered a major defeat. But for what concerns us here this part of the Condom text has decidedly not 'gardé la tradition locale' of some 'incursions normandes' in the time of Charles the Bald. It is in fact quite obviously a late and very garbled hotchpotch of real historical events, possibly borrowing for its core from Prudentius's annals involving Slavs, Northmen and Hungarians in the mid-ninth century, tacked on as an introduction to later contents which refer to supposed happenings concerning Condom in the tenth century. Furthermore, why would the late author of this text spend the majority of his time summarising the various troubles caused by the Slavs, the Hungarians and the Northmen in the decades after Louis the Pious's death in 840 and then miss out the next century and a half and suddenly talk about another supposed invasion of both Aquitaine and Gascony in the late tenth century? It makes no sense.

Conclusion

In conclusion, whilst as has been mentioned in several places in earlier chapters there is the very real possibility that Northmen did actually attack places on or near the southern bank of the Garonne in Gascony proper in the ninth century, Mussot-Goulard's whole construction and chronology regarding extensive Scandinavian raids in Gascony, and the Northmen having long-standing bases there, which is based in large part on Marca's and Brugèles's earlier views, and the belief of all of them in the historical veracity of what we find in Nicholas Bertrand's sixteenth-century text, is suspect to say the very least. It should probably be set aside,[1] as should those later popular constructions which follow her and her local sources. Whilst I vehemently disagree with many of the statements regarding Northmen 'in Gascony' made by the Gascon historian J.-F. Bladé in his many works I can only agree with his summary regarding the widespread destruction of many Gascon towns and episcopal seats in the ninth century supposedly described by Nicolas Bertrand: 'L'histoire authentique de la Gascogne aux neuvième, dixième et onzième siècles, proteste contre cette prétendue et universelle destruction des villes épiscopales de la Gascogne par les Normands.'[2]

[1] M. Pelat, *Les identités ethniques en Novempopulanie*, p. 9, n. 25, says: 'Certains historiens ont parfois eu la tentation de surinterpréter les sources ou de ne pas les critiquer suffisamment. Malgré son intérêt indéniable, c'est l'une des critiques que l'on peut faire, entre autres, à l'oeuvre de R. Mussot-Goulard (Mussot-Goulard 1982) qui utilise en particulier des chroniques dont la véracité est contestable.' This is a view expressed earlier by F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', pp. 23-24: 'R. Mussot-Goulard s'appuie plus sur les sources tardives des XIe au XVIe siècle mais sans les critiquer suffisamment.'

[2] J.-F. Bladé, 'Géographie politique du Sud-Ouest de la Gaule', p. 262.

The British historian of early medieval Iberia and of the so-called 'Basques' Roger Collins, who I do not think would ever claim to be an authority on the Northmen in Gaul or France, once wrote (after accepting the historicity of the semi-legendary battle of Taller in 982 where 'Duke William Sancho put a term to recorded Viking incursions in the territory of the duchy'),[1] that in earlier times 'it is unlikely that the duchy of Gascony was a major target of Viking raiding, not least because it contained so few towns and monasteries, the prime sites for plundering'.[2] He continues: 'Viking slave trading should not be discounted, and both the Adour and the Garonne provided easy routes of access for the deep and quick water-borne penetration of defenceless countryside that the Scandinavians favoured.[3] However, the sand dunes of the Landes and the valleys of the Pyrenees constituted territory less amenable to Viking tactics and tastes.'[4]

Living for a long time on the banks of the river Nive a little upstream of Bayonne, I would be quite content, delighted even, to believe all of Renée Mussot-Goulard's grand conception regarding the Northmen in Gascony in the ninth century. But as a historian of a rather critical, although perhaps not hyper-critical, bent I am obliged to conclude that there is simply no reliable evidence for any significant and long-standing presence of Northmen in Bayonne or elsewhere in Gascony in the ninth century (or for that matter in the tenth century), nor for their devastation of nearly all the towns of Gascony.

That some Northmen had at certain times entered the mouth of the Adour, which at the time lay far to the north of Bayonne along the coast of the Landes near to Vieux-Boucau and Capbreton until a canal was dug by Louis de Foix in the late sixteenth century,[5] is quite possible; they may also have visited the town of Bayonne itself in whatever state it was then in. Frédéric Boutoulle rightly points out, 'Al-Himyari, géographe maghrébin de la fin XIVe siècle, dont le *Kitab al-Rawd al-Mitar* [*The Book of the Fragrant Garden*] est une compilation de sources

[1] For which see Chapter 15.
[2] R. Collins, *The Basques*, p. 132.
[3] He references here J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Vikings in Francia', in his *Early Medieval History: Collected Essays of J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 217-36.
[4] R. Collins, *The Basques*, p. 132.
[5] For which see primarily S. M. Lewis, 'The flood that saved Bayonne', *The Wild Peak* (2012), available online: https://thewildpeak.wordpress.com/2012/01/18/the-flood-that-saved-bayonne/; J.-B. Bailac, *Nouvelle chronique de la ville de bayonne, par un Bayonnais* (Bayonne, 1827); P. Roudie (ed.), *IVe Centenaire du détournement de l'Adour, 1578-1978, Actes du Congrès de Bayonne, 28-29 octobre 1978, Bulletin de la Société des Sciences, Lettres et Arts de Bayonne*, 134 (1978); C. Grenet-Delisle, *Louis de foix horloger, ingénieur, architecte de 4 rois*, *Fédération historique du Sud-ouest, Recherches et travaux d'histoire sur le Sud-Ouest de la Franc*e (1998). See also the lovely *roman* of Fernand Lot (not to be confused with Ferdinand Lot), *L'homme qui vola le fleuve* (Bordeaux, 1938), and particularly the map on page 15.

arabes décrivant des villes et des pays, plus anciennes mais difficiles à dater, évoque les Normands (appelés Magus) dans la notice qu'il consacre à Dax':[1]

> [Dax] est bâtie en grandes pierres rectangulaires et située sur le bord d'un grand cours d'eau, que les Normands [*magus*] remontent dans leurs bateaux pour venir attaquer les habitants de la région.[2]

Although I would just add that the Arabic term *Magus* (or better *Majūs*) although it is often used for Northmen can sometimes mean other raiders, often though not always infidels,[3] and as Boutoulle says the period/s Al-Himyari is referring to in his fourteenth-century compilation is unclear and difficult to date. In my opinion Levi-Provençal was a little too hasty to equate these *Majūs* with Northmen of whatever period.

Yet even if we accept that Northmen may indeed have come to the Adour, for which there is otherwise no reliable historical or as yet archaeological evidence that they actually did so, we must still reject, though with some regret on my part, Mussot-Goulard's and her followers' whole thesis regarding a wholesale desolation of Gascony by the *Normands* in the ninth century.

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[1] F. Boutoulle, 'Bayonne au Moyen Âge. La croissance de la ville médiévale (VIe-milieu XIIIe siècle)', in F. Boutoulle, É. Jean-Courret, and S. Lavaud (eds), *Atlas Historique de Bayonne* (Bordeaux, 2020), pp. 133-60.
[2] *Ibid*. Translation from E. Levi-Provençal, *La péninsule ibérique au Moyen Âge d'après le 'hitāb ar-rawḍ al-miʿṭār fī ḫabar al-aḳṭār' d'Ibn ʿAbd al-munʿim al-Ḥimyarī, texte arabe des notices relatives à l'Espagne, au Portugal et au Sud-Ouest de la France* (Leiden, 1938), p. 35, and also found in J. Clémens, 'Dax, capitale de la Gascogne au IXe siècle d'après Al-Himyari', *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 385. 1 (1982), pp. 17-33.
[3] See just for example A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, esp. pp. 15-27, 63-64; S. M. Pons-Sanz, 'The Basque country and the Vikings during the ninth century'.

Chapter 9

FROM THE EDICT OF PÎTRES TO THE SIEGE OF ANGERS: 864-873

By the middle of 864 northern Francia had enjoyed a two-year respite from Scandinavian raids since Weland and other Northmen had left the Seine in early 862,[1] and from 863 to early 864 the recently arrived Northmen on the Loire (from the Seine and from Iberia) had been making raids to Toulouse and Clermont. Thus, when Charles the Bald called a general assembly at Pîtres in June he not only dealt with the case of Pippin II who had recently been captured but he was also keen to address the question of the future defence of his realm against any future return of the Northmen. Simon Coupland summarises as follows: 'Pippin's punishment was considered at the assembly held at Pîtres in June, which also discussed several other matters related to the kingdom's defence against the Vikings. These included the construction of fortifications and the demolition of unauthorised strongholds, the penalties facing those who sold or gave weapons, armour or horses to the invaders, the rights and responsibilities of those who had fled their homes or lost goods or lands due to the Viking attacks, and the procedures for the effective mobilisation of the army.'[2] But all these preparatory measures, which mostly concerned the north of Charles's realm, were pretty much in vain because when the Northmen did return to this area in 865 they had not hindered their progress in any way.[3]

But in the west of 'France' by the second half of 864 Northmen were once again back on the Loire, a presence which would last on and off until 882 - and also likely later - during which time these Loire-based Northmen would make raids not only along the Loire itself but also into Neustria, into Brittany and into Aquitaine 'proper' south of the river. As has been discussed in Chapter 6, these probably included those who had been with Pippin II at Toulouse earlier in the year, but it is not impossible that some Northmen had remained on the Loire while the raids to Toulouse and Clermont were underway, although I do tend to doubt it. This whole over two-

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 204: 'Im allgemeinen war seit 862 eine wesentliche Beruhigung eingetreten.'
[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 65. For the assembly and Edict of Pîtres see *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 114; trans. Nelson, pp. 118-19, and *Edictum Pistense*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, pp. 310-28. S. Coupland has provided an excellent and very welcome English translation of the Edict of Pîtres, it is available online at https://www.academia.edu/6680741/The-Edict-of-Pîtres-translation. In addition, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 203-8, gives an insightful summary of the assembly and the edict particularly as it relates to the Northmen. See also J. L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 97-100; *eadem*, 'The reign of Charles the Bald', pp. 15-16.
[3] For which see *AB* 865-866: ed. Grat, pp. 122-27; trans. Nelson, pp. 127-31; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 66-68; F. Lot, 'Le pont de Pitres', pp. 3-9; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 213-18.

decades-long period and the various 'connections' of the Northmen involved will be examined in this chapter and in the subsequent one. We will also examine what we can know or surmise of the historical chieftain called *Alsting(us)* in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* or *Hasting* by Regino of Prüm,[1] as well as the much-neglected chieftain called Baret and his possible Irish connection. At the end of the next chapter, as a sort of epilogue, the period after 882 will be considered, taking us to the year 990.

The attack on Orléans and Fleury by *dux* Baret

The first time we hear of these Northmen is towards the end of 864. According to Archbishop Hincmar towards the end of the year Robert 'count of Anjou' (*comes Andegauensis*) fought against two companies of Northmen on the Loire. He managed to kill all of one company - except for a few who escaped - but then the other larger group attacked him from behind. Robert himself was wounded, and 'having lost a few of his men', which is most probably an understatement, 'he decided to withdraw',[2] although it seems he recovered from his injuries within a few days.[3]

Nevertheless, as Lot says, 'il est certain que cet échec abattit les Francs et redouble l'ardeur des Normands',[4] because early the next year under a chieftain called Baret they ventured much further up the Loire to attack Saint Benedict's monastery at Fleury as well as the city of Orléans. Hincmar tells us that early in 865, probably in February:[5]

> Northmen based on the Loire made their way up the river with a favourable wind, divine judgement thus making it easy for them, to make a full-scale attack. They reached the monastery of St-Benedict known as Fleury and burned it. On their way back they burned Orléans and the monasteries both in the *civitas* and round it, except for the church of the Holy Cross which, despite great efforts on the part of the Northmen, the flames proved unable to consume. So, they sailed back down the river and after ravaging all the neighbouring districts they returned to their base.[6]

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[1] Dudo of Saint-Quentin calls him *Alstignus* obviously taking the name from the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*.
[2] *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 116; trans. Nelson, p. 121.
[3] *Ibid*. This whole episode does rather smack of a report given by Robert himself.
[4] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 494.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 208; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 65.
[6] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 117; trans. Nelson, p. 122. The attack is also reported in the *Annals of Massay* but once again one year too late: *Annales Masciacenses* 866 [*recte* 865], p. 169. As S. Coupland points out (*Charles the Bald*, p. 66): 'It was perhaps the raid on Fleury which prompted the monks of Cormery to ask the King in June 865 to confirm

Adrevald of Fleury gives additional details. He tells us that the Northmen responsible for this attack had first attacked and burned Orléans, with only the church of Sainte-Croix being saved,[1] and then 'some of them' under their *dux* Baret with his forty ships[2] arrived at Saint Benedict's monastery where they found the monastery buildings empty of inhabitants and the relics of the saint removed. Yet they did find that the monastery was full of every temporal or material comfort ('cunctis vero mortalium temporaneis refertum commodis'). Adrevald also tells of how Baret's Northmen then ransacked the monastery before setting the buildings ablaze, after which nothing was left. He also tells us the reason why the monks and their holy relics had managed to escape before the Northmen's arrival: after the first unsuccessful attack on the town of Orléans, which happened in 854 and which Adrevald also mentions elsewhere, a certain Bernard 'nobilissimi generis viro', who was 'at the head of this holy place', that is he was the abbot,[3] had had the prescience of mind to order the construction of a casket/reliquary so that on the first report of any imminent danger the monks could place the bones of their holy protector on a bier/litter ('coffret portatif') and carry it out of any future danger from the pagans. And

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their ownership of a hospice at Pont-sur-Seine (Aube) which could serve as a refuge in case of Viking attack'; see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 284, pp. 127-29. É. Mabille ('Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 177) followed by W. Vogel (*Die Normannen*, p. 209, n. 4) and F. Lot ('La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 496) suggest that it was likely at this time that the canons of Saint-Martin at Tours fled from their *cella* at Léré in Berry (dep. Cher) to their long-held *villa* of Marsat in the Auvergne (dep. Puy-de-Dôme, arr. and cant. Riom). But given that there is no indication that Baret's Northmen proceeded even further up the Loire in 865 perhaps this move more likely happened (if it ever did) when the Northmen were in the area, perhaps when they attacked Bourges in 867 (see below) as suggested by S. Coupland (*ibid*., p. 70). It was argued by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 209, and C. Brühl, 'Diplomatische Miszellen zur Geschichte des ausgehenden 9. Jahrhunderts III: ein Deperditum Karls d. K. für die Abtei St-Mesmin de Micy bei Orléans', *Archiv für Diplomatik*, 3 (1957), pp. 13-19, 'that the abbey of St Mesmin-de-Micy (Loiret) was also attacked at this time, forcing the monks to flee to Orléans' (cf. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 66). The abbey of Saint-Mesmin-de-Micy (dep. Loiret) was located slightly downstream of Orléans, and as Hincmar reports that the Northmen 'burned Orléans and the monasteries both in the *civitas* and round it' this might have been the case. S. Coupland's objection (*ibid*.) is that Letald of Micy's late tenth-century *Miracula sanccti Maximini abbatis Maciancensis* (*PL* 137, ed. J. P. Migne, col. 795-823, at col. 804-805) 'has no clear chronological framework, while the monks would scarcely have fled upriver to Orléans while the Vikings were returning downstream from Fleury!'. Regarding Letald of Micy's work, it certainly is unclear about precise chronology although it borrows much from Adrevald of Fleury. It could well be that the destruction of Letald's abbey described by himself may have happened in 854 during the Northmen's first attempt to take Orléans, but reading the story closely to my mind 865 fits better. The objection that 'the monks would scarcely have fled upriver to Orléans while the Vikings were returning downstream from Fleury' is not so decisive because Baret's fleet would have approached the abbey before reaching Orléans and Fleury, and there is no reason why the monks had not fled to Orléans hoping, vainly as it turned out, to find safety there. For a modern reappraisal of the *Miracula sancti Maximini* see K. Krönert, 'Les Miracula sancti Maximini (BHL 5826) : entre hagiographie et historiographie', *Revue Bénédictine*, 115. 1 (2005), pp. 112-50.

[1] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 33, p. 72; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 174-75.

[2] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 34, pp. 75-76; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 178-79. The words used by Adrevald are 'parsque illorum', translated by Davril as 'quelques-uns d'entre eux'. This has rarely if ever been noted. It seems to suggest that Baret's force had only been one (admittedly rather large) part of the Scandinavian force which came to Orléans. The possible significance of this is touched on below.

[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 495. Bernard attended the synod of Soissons in 853 and the council of Savonnières in 859. He is also mentioned as abbot of Fleury in Flodoard's *Historia Remensis ecclesiae*.

this is what they had done when the second incursion towards Orléans was heard of at Fleury; the monks with the relics of their patron left with Abbot Bernard, who was now in his last years.[1] Adrevald of Fleury had also mentioned the 865 attack on Orléans in an earlier chapter when he tells us that the *civitas* was burned but that the church of Sainte-Croix had been saved by 'the efforts of good men' (... *studio bonorum hominum remanente*),[2] which might seem to suggest that it was ransomed rather than saved by divine intervention as Hincmar says.

According to Walther Vogel, 'Robert war diesen Unternehmungen zu Wasser gegenüber offenbar machtlos', 'Against this waterborne undertaking Robert was obviously powerless'.[3] On the other hand, Ferdinand Lot after saying that this raid was contemporary with a meeting held at Tusey on the Meuse between Charles the Bald and Louis the German,[4] both in February, conjectures: 'Peut-être Robert le Fort assista-t-il à cette entrevue [at Tusey] où les deux frères s'entourèrent des conseils de leurs principaux fidèles, auquel cas les Normands auraient mis à profit son absence.'[5]

This attack on Saint Benedict's important monastery at Fleury was the first but it would not be the last.

We do not know the name/s of the leader or leaders of the Northmen on the Loire in 864; it is quite possible that Baret himself was one of them although we cannot be sure. As noted above there were two groups/companies of Northmen (*duos cuneos de Nortmannis*) in 864. Whether these two companies were two contingents of the same original force or whether they were previously quite separate warbands cannot be known with any certainty, however it is most conceivable that Baret was the leader of one of them, and possibly the larger one because his forty ships were indeed quite a large force.[6] Furthermore, the raid to Orléans and Fleury likely happened in about February 865, which would suggest that Baret's fleet had been on the river the year before because it is highly unlikely that a Scandinavian fleet of this size would have braved the wild Atlantic Ocean to come to the Loire in deep mid-winter.[7]

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[1] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 34, pp. 75-76; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 178-79.
[2] *Ibid.*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 33, p. 72; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 174-75. See also *ibid.*: ed. de Certain, book I, chap. 36, pp. 78-79; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 182-83.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 209.
[4] For which see below.
[5] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 494, n. 3.
[6] As noted above, Baret's forty ships seem not to have been the totality of the fleet and army that came first to Orléans. Were those who had not come to Fleury still part of Baret's force or were they a separate force under a different leader, just like there were two forces the year before? We really do not know.
[7] Much later Ademar of Chabannes also mentions a *dux Baretus* as raiding in the coastal regions of Francia before a 'king Hasting/Astenc(us)', 'Et Nortmannorum alie cohortes Francia[m] primum duce Bareto, deinde cum rege Astenco [...]'; see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 127-28; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 139; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 220. Scholars

Whether Baret stayed on the Loire after his raid on Fleury and Orléans in early 865 is also not known. Had he soon thereafter left the Loire for other parts unknown or had he stayed a little longer,[1] and perhaps even been involved in the events later in the year and even in 866 culminating in the important battle at Brissarthe in September which Regino of Prüm said had primarily involved a chieftain called 'Hasting'?

As will be explored in more detail in Chapter 11 with regard to the attack on Tours in 903, which was undertaken by two chieftains one of whom was also called Baret, the name Baret (Old Irish Bárid/ Bárith, ON Bárðr or Báręðr) has very clear Irish connections and except for the name's appearance here on the Loire in 865 and in 903 at Tours all other mentions of the name in the ninth and tenth centuries exclusively concern Ireland and Irish-related events in England. It might be of interest to note that the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* say that in 867:

> Earl Bárith (*Bárith íarla*) and Háimar, two men of a noble family of the Norwegians [actually *Lochlanns*], came through the centre of Connacht towards Luimnech [the Shannon estuary, later Limerick], as if they would do nothing to the Connachtmen. Nevertheless, that was not how it happened, for they trusted not in numbers, but rather in their own strength. The Connachtmen proceeded to overcome them by ambush; for at that time there happened to be a certain Munster man among them strong and hard and clever in the use of weapons, and that Munster man, moreover, was clever at making plans. The Connachtmen asked him to go to the Norwegians [=*Lochlanns*], as if he were going to guide them, and to kill Bárith.
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> When he came to the place where Háimar was, he stabbed Háimar forcefully with a javelin, and he killed him. But a Connacht soldier who accompanied him in order to kill Bárith did not happen to do as he desired, for he was wounded in his thigh, and he barely

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of Ademar get somewhat lost here because although they know a lot about Ademar and his works they know little about the Northmen. For example P. Bourgain *et al.*, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, p. 267, note III, 20, 27-28, say: 'On ne sait pas bien qui est ce *Baretus*. S'agit-il du duc normand Bioern qui traita en 858 avec Charles le Chauve […] ?' They are followed in this by J. Chauvin and G. Pon, *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, p. 220, n. 189, who say that *Baretu*s is 'peut-être le duc normand Bioern, qui traita avec Charles le Chauve en 858'. They (and this all seems to come from Georges Pon) seem to be completely unaware of both the Baret who attacked Fleury in 865 and the Baret who attacked Tours in 903. Given that although it is possible that Ademar had access to Radbod's works left at Tours, his reference to *Baretus* coming before Hasting (*Astencus*) seems to me to suggest that he was borrowing from Adrevald's *Miracles of Saint Benedict* for Baret, coupled (given the spelling) with either the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* or the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* for 'Astencus', although for this latter name other transmissions could certainly be explored.

[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 495, n. 3 and p. 497, clearly states and asserts that the Northmen who had attacked Orléans and Fleury had then returned to their base on an island opposite the monastery of Saint-Florent-le Vieil at Mont-Glonne before then going on foot to Poitiers. I discuss this more below. But if this was so it was then Baret who attacked and burned Poitiers and it was probably his force which then shortly thereafter suffered a defeat at the hands of Robert of Anjou.

escaped afterwards. Then the Connachtmen attacked the Norwegians and slaughtered the Norwegians, but it would not have been thus if the woods and the night had not been near. They returned afterwards to the place from which they had come, and did not go to Luimnech.[1]

This jarl Bárith is then mentioned repeatedly in various Irish annals all the way through to his grim death in Dublin in 881.[2] He may well have been the son of the famous Irish-based chieftain Ímar/Ívarr (d. 873), but this is only attested in the *Chronicum Scotorum* reporting his death.[3]

That the *dux* Baret on the Loire in 865 was identical with this later Irish-based Jarl Bárith was proposed by the Scandinavian historians Peter Andreas Munch and Gustav Storm.[4] Referring to the views of Munch and Storm, Ferdinand Lot did not commit himself on the issue, saying just that the idea was 'peut-être téméraire'.[5] Walther Vogel, after mentioning Storm's view that this Baret was identical with *Baridh* 'son of Ivar King of Limerick', which he corrects to be 'Baridh of Dublin', did not offer an opinion.[6]

Now if, and it is a very big if, the *dux* Baret in France in 865 was really the same person as the later Irish-based jarl Bárith who first appears in the Irish record in 867 this would beg numerous questions. Ímar/Ívarr is first attested in Ireland in 857 although he may have arrived a little earlier. If Baret on the Loire in 865 was his son, had he come first to Ireland in the 850s with his father and subsequently decided to take his own following to France to undertake a bit of raiding at some point thereafter? Or had he as a jarl of *Lochlann*, probably in present-day Norway,[7] stayed at home in Scandinavia after his father had left for Ireland and later collected a fleet together to undertake his own raids in France before leaving to go to Ireland where after

[1] *FAI* §350, pp. 128-29.
[2] For which see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 23-25, 247.
[3] *Chronicum Scotorum*, *s.a.* 881: 'Barith son of Ímar, head of the Norsemen, died by a miracle of God and Ciannán', cf. *Chronicum Scotorum: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs, from the earliest times to A.D. 1135, with a supplement containing the events from 1141 to 1150*, ed. and trans. W. M. Hennessy, Rolls Series, 46 (London, 1866). See also *AU* 881.3: 'Barith, a great despot of the Norsemen, was killed by St. Ciannán.' C. Downham proposes that Bárith/Bárðr was indeed a son of Ívarr (cf. *ibid*., Fig. 5, p. 28 and Fig. 3, p. 4), and she says (*ibid*., p. 24): 'After Ívarr's death his son Bárðr took control of Dublin. One of Bárðr's first actions was to lead a raid against the south west of Ireland, perhaps to demonstrate his newly won authority.' See also S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark', pp. 32-34.
[4] P. A. Munch, *Det norske Folks Historie*, vol. 1 (Christiania/Oslo, 1852), p. 450; G. Storm, *Kritiske Bidrag*, p. 63. J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 2, p. 146, p. 140, n. 4, p. 258, n. 3, while noting the possibility of the identity of Baret and 'Baridh' says the name is very common, which actually it is not, except in Ireland.
[5] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 495.
[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 208, n. 3.
[7] See C. Etchingham, 'The location of historical Laithlinn/Lochla(i)nn'; *idem*, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 7.

his father's death, in 873, he took over the rulership of the evolving Scandinavian 'colony' of Dublin? We will never know; there are a lot of questions and not too many answers.

Further raids and fights up to the battle at Brissarthe: 865-866

The operations of the Northmen on the Loire in late 864 culminating in the attack on Fleury and on Orléans at the beginning of the following year may have prompted the Franks to be more vigilant.

From the *villa* of Tusey on the Meuse (*Tusiacum super Mosam*),[1] where Charles the Bald was meeting his half-brother Louis the German in February 865, Charles sent four royal emissaries (*missi*) to those parts of Burgundy in his possession, who, in cooperation with the bishops and counts of these areas, should undertake painstaking remedial maintenance of their ships on those rivers that could serve *infideles nostri* (Northmen?) as incursion routes.[2] Furthermore, Charles and Louis also wrote a letter to Pope Nicholas I from Tusey in which they informed the pope that it had been decided that all the bishops of West Francia and others of their *fidelibus* were to stand guard 'day and night' (*die noctuque*) against the maritime pirates (*contra piratas maritimos*), and if they came they were to resist them with their forces (*cum militibus*).[3] It was in fact not long after this that Northmen in fifty ships returned to the Seine, possibly in mid-July.[4]

Possibly emboldened by their successful and unresisted raid on Orléans and Fleury at the beginning of the year, in the summer of 865: 'Northmen on the Loire made their way on foot to Poitiers without meeting any resistance, burned the *civitas* and returned to their ships unscathed.'[5] Thus whereas they had been bought off a year and a half earlier, probably by Ramnulf I of Poitiers, now they had managed to capture and burn the town.

But where had these Northmen who had attacked Orléans and Fleury, and who then some months later left their ships on the Loire to go on foot to Poitiers before returning to their ships,

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[1] Dep. Meuse, arr. Commercy, cant. Vaucouleurs.

[2] *Capitulare Tusiacense in Burgundiam directum*, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, pp. 329-32, at chap. 14, pp. 331-32. Although the term *infideles nostri* is used repeatedly in Charles's letter to mean 'untrue vassals', W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 210 and n. 1, suggests that here, in chap. 14, the term can only be understood to mean the Northmen. This is a most intriguing argument but is not completely assured. However, in any case it is a very interesting early reference to Frankish ships being available for the defence of rivers from potential opponents.

[3] The letter to the pope from Tusey has not survived but we know it was sent from Nicholas's reply to Charles and Louis dated 22 April 865: *MGH*, *Epistolae Karolini aevi*, IV, no. 38, p. 309.

[4] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 122; trans. Nelson, p. 127. The later *Annals of Rouen* give the date of arrival as mid-July: *Annales Rotomagenses*, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 26, p. 494: '865. Venerunt Normanni medio Iulio.' F. Lot, 'Le pont de Pitres', p. 5, places their arrival in August; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 213, follows the mid-July dating.

[5] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 122; trans. Nelson, p. 127. F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 497, places this trip to Poitiers in August. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 210.

been based? Lot very strongly states that on both occasions it was *sans doute* at their base on an island near the monastery of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil at Mont-Glonne.[1] This is quite possible but it is not 'without doubt'.[2]

Wherever their base may have been, after returning unscathed on foot to their ships from Poitiers to the Loire shortly thereafter it seems that Robert the Strong 'slew more than 500 of these Northmen based on the Loire without losing any of his own men, and sent to Charles the standards and weapons captured from the Northmen'.[3] Just like on other occasions this supposed significant victory without a single loss does seem to be Robert singing his own praises, or in modern parlance we might say 'bigging himself up'. It is really highly improbable that Robert had killed five hundred Northmen without losing even one of his men. Where Robert's purported victory happened is not said, but Robert's Neustrian command extended along the Loire only as far west as the river Maine at Angers which was probably also his comital residence. Thus, given that the Northmen had first attacked Poitiers (in Aquitaine) on foot before returning to their ships moored on the Loire and then been somewhere in Robert's region, no doubt north or east of the Loire in Neustria, Robert's reported victory had most probably happened not too far away from Angers itself.

In any case Charles the Bald was likely not greatly happy with Robert's performance because shortly afterwards he replaced him in Neustria with his own young son Louis the Stammerer, to whom he gave the county of Anjou, the abbey of Marmoutier and some *villae*. Robert 'who had been *marchio* in Anjou' was transferred and given 'the counties of Auxerre and Nevers, in addition to other *honores* he already held',[4] which included the county of Autun,[5] although he was called back to Neustria in 866[6] even though as one of the two commanders on the Seine at

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[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine, p. 495, n. 3 and p. 497. As Hincmar (*AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 117; trans. Nelson, p. 122) tells us that after attacking Fleury and Orléans the Northmen 'sailed back down the river and after ravaging all the neighbouring districts they returned to their base' would certainly suggest a base someway downriver of Orléans, as was also suggested by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 209.

[2] Perhaps telling against this location is that in January 866 when Haecfrid, the abbot of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil, wrote to Charles the Bald and told him that the once beautiful province of the lower Loire valley had been reduced to a desert, and that the local inhabitants, particularly the monks, had been driven from their homes (for which see below), he does not explicitly say that his own community had had to flee. If the Northmen had been based on the island opposite Mont-Glonne throughout 865 then either the community had paid the Northmen, maybe Baret's, to leave them alone, or Haecfrid and his monks had in fact fled.

[3] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 122; trans. Nelson, p. 127.

[4] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 123; trans. Nelson, p. 128.

[5] Cf. *AB* 864: ed. Grat, p. 114; trans. Nelson, p. 119 and n. 24; *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 126; trans. Nelson, p. 131 and n. 10.

[6] For this replacement of Robert by Hugh the Abbot see K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo aus dem Hause der Welfen Markgraf von Neustrien', *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte*, 14 (1874), pp. 38-128, pp. 48-50, and É. Bourgeois, *Hugues l'abbé, margrave de Neustrie et archichapelain de France à la fin du IXe siècle* (Caen, 1885), p. 100; F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 435, n. 3. Hugh had returned to West Francia in 865; see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 220, n. 3.

the beginning of 866 he had spectacularly failed to prevent a Scandinavian attack on Melun and Charles was obliged to pay the Northmen involved 4,000 pounds of silver to leave.[1]

In spite of their supposed losses in the summer, or perhaps even because of them, in the autumn, possibly as late as October or November according to Lot,[2] the 'Northmen on the Loire' then 'joined forces with the Bretons and attacked Le Mans'. 'They sacked it without opposition, and went back to their ships', on the Loire there can be no doubt.[3]

This renewal of the alliance with the Bretons is interesting. It had been some of the Northmen who had returned from Spain in late 861 or early 862 who had been hired by Salomon to fight Robert the Strong. If my earlier reconstruction of these events is correct then it was these same Spanish returnees who had accompanied Pippin II to Toulouse in early 864, and after Pippin had been captured in Poitou in May, perhaps with the connivance of his Scandinavian 'allies', had then come back to the Loire. From Salomon's point of view, he could have seen the return of Northmen he had previously known as a good opportunity to either hire them once again the next year, or less likely simply ally with them, to attack Robert's territory again.[4] On the other hand, and this is not in any way contradictory, perhaps it was Baret's fleet that had attacked Poitiers as implicitly suggested by Lot.[5]

But these now Loire-based Northmen were not finished yet. This time apparently without the Bretons: 'On 29 December [865] a contingent of those Northmen who were based on the Loire[6] broke out into Neustria to plunder. They attacked Counts Gauzfrid, Harvey and Rorgo who were coming up together against them.[7] In the fight Gauzfrid's brother Rorgo was killed, and the Northmen fled back to their ships [again on the Loire no doubt] having lost a great many of their men.'[8] These Neustrian magnates had had more success against the Northmen than Robert the Strong had previously had, but at a significant cost in the death of Rorgo. We may

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[1] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 125-26; trans. Nelson, pp. 129-30. J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 213. See also S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 68.

[2] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 501 and n. 1. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 210, places this in the 'autumn' of 865.

[3] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 124; trans. Nelson, p. 128.

[4] For Salomon's position vis-a-vis the Franks at this time and the possible reasons for his renewed hostilities towards them, and the whole question of the the Breton church, see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 304-18; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* pp. 69-77; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 106-7; *eadem*, 'The "archbishopric" of Dol and the ecclesiastical politics of ninth-century Brittany', *Studies in Church History*, 18 (1982), pp. 59-70.

[5] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 495, n. 3 and p. 497.

[6] Does 'a contingent' imply that other parts of the Northmen's force stayed on the Loire?

[7] Gauzfrid was count of Le Mans. For Harvey (Hervé in French) see J. Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés*, pp. 315-18; K. F. Werner, 'Bedeutende Adelsfamilien im Reich Karls des Großen', in H. Beumann (ed.), *Karl der Grosse: Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, vol. I, *Persönlichkeit und Geschichte* (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 83-142, at pp. 137-42; F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 429, n. 2; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 105, n. 5.

[8] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 125; trans. Nelson, p. 129.

also ask if this particular 'contingent' of Loire-based Northmen had been paid by Salomon to make this raid? It is possible but we will never know.

At the beginning of 866 the situation along the Loire seemed dire. In January, Haecfrid, the abbot of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil at Mont-Glonne, wrote to King Charles and told him that the once beautiful province of the lower Loire valley had been reduced to a desert and that the local inhabitants, particularly the monks, had been driven from their homes. Charles therefore conceded to the brothers the *cella* of Saint-Gondon (dep. Loiret) to serve as a refuge for themselves and for the body of Saint Florent.[1] Coupland opined that 'the community probably occupied the site soon afterwards'.[2] But Isabelle Cartron casts much doubt on this. Her view is that the monks had 'without doubt' had difficulties to 'rendre maître' of this *cella* because Carloman reconfirmed this dependency in 881 in exactly the same terms as the charter of 866. Indeed, in the same act, she points out, Carloman conceded to the monks of Saint-Florent an exemption from *tonlieux* for four boats, and thus 'les moines semblent donc encore résider au Mont-Glonne'.[3]

Yet despite the Loire Northmen joining with the Bretons to attack Le Mans in the autumn of 865 and again in 866 (for which see below), Simon Coupland suggests that their first target in 866 was Brittany itself. As he puts it: 'At some time between April and July 866 the Vikings on the Loire evidently made an attack into Brittany, since the monks of Redon under Abbot Conwoion deserted their monastery and sought refuge at Plélan-le-Grand (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine). Plélan had formerly been one of the Breton ruler's palaces, but Salomon granted it to the monks of Redon for them to establish a monastery there.'[4] There is some difficulty with this because although the two charters of Redon upon which the idea is based do say in essence what Coupland says they do, they do not, however, in any way indicate that the movement to Plélan was

[1] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 287, pp. 132-36, dated 16 January 866.

[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 68. According to Coupland (*ibid*., p. 68, n. 97): 'The fact that St Gondon lies downstream of Léré, which the monks of St Denis [*sic*] used as a refuge, makes it extremely improbable that Léré was abandoned at this time, as has sometimes been argued.' I will not pursue Coupland's thought more here because it seems to me to be confusing or conflating the refuge at Léré which was granted to the community of Saint-Martin at Tours in 862, and not to the monks of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil (and certainly not to Saint-Denis), with the concession of Saint-Gordon to the monks of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil. The question of the peregrinations of the monks of Saint-Martin of Tours, and their chronology, is a complex subject which I touch upon briefly elsewhere in this study.

[3] I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 52-53. This *diplôme* or charter of Carloman is dated 5 June 881: *RAL*, no. 55, p. 140. Cartron discusses both the authenticity of this charter and what we know of the future whereabouts and movements of the community of Saint-Florent: *ibid*., pp. 53-54 and notes.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 69. His rationale (*ibid*., p. 69, n. 101) is as follows: 'The date can be established from the fact that the first securely dated charter to refer to the monastery of St Sauveur at Plélan dates from 13 July 866, while the last to specify that the brothers were still at Redon was drawn up on 8 April 866 (De Courson (ed.), *Cartulaire de Redon*, nos. 49, 207: pp. 39-40, 160). This dating is also consistent with the fact that Salomon's wife Wenbrit was buried in the new monastery between 13 July and 12 August 866 (nos. 49, 52: pp. 39-40, 41-2).'

precipitated by a real attack into Brittany by the Loire Northmen or any other Northmen for that matter. It could indeed be that even though Salomon had allied with the Northmen a few months earlier to attack Le Mans he, or at least the monks of Redon, had feared that they might still turn against the Bretons; yet whatever the case the Bretons were once again aligned with the Northmen by the autumn of 866.

Robert the Strong's complete failure against the Northmen at Melun in the north in very early 866, when Robert and Count Odo had been put to flight 'even without a battle',[1] had unlikely brought Robert any great favour with Charles the Bald; but the king still needed his support because of Salomon's renewed fight with the Franks, in conjunction of course again with Loire-based Northmen.[2] Thus in the spring of the same year 'Charles endowed Count Robert with the abbacy of St-Martin [at Tours], which he had taken away from Engilwin; and

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[1] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 125; trans. Nelson, p. 129. S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, based on his *Charles the Bald*, p. 68, summarises: 'Early in 866 the Viking ships slipped anchor and headed upriver towards Melun, shadowed on both banks by the troops deployed by Charles the Bald. Suddenly the Northmen disembarked and fell upon what appeared to be the larger and stronger of the Frankish squadrons, led by Counts Robert and Odo, whereupon the Franks, despite their numbers and their illustrious commanders, broke and ran.' Regarding Robert and Odo's complete failure at Melun in early, 866, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 215, says that Robert's defeat during a 'surprise' attack does not accord with his known courageousness (*bekannter Tapferkeit*). R. Merlet, *Les comtes de Chartres, de Châteaudun et de Blois aux IXe et Xe siècles* (Chartres, 1900), p. 55, says, quite rightly in my view regarding Robert and Odo's *renommée* : 'Les Normands, ayant remonté le cours de ce fleuve, s'étaient avancés jusqu'à Melun. Pour empêcher leur débarquement, Charles le Chauve dirigea contre eux plusieurs troupes : à la tête de la plus importante, il préposa Robert le Fort et le comte Eudes. La renommée de Robert et d'Eudes brillait alors du plus vif éclat ; mais cette expédition n'ajouta rien à leur gloire, s'étant trouvés trop inférieurs en nombre [which is actually nowhere mentioned by Hincmar], ils aimèrent mieux reculer que livrer combat aux Normands, et les pirates, chargés de butin, purent impunément regagner leurs navires. A la suite de cet échec, Charles le Chauve dut acheter la paix de ces pillards moyennant quatre mille livres d'argent.' F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', *Le Moyen Âge*, 15 (1902) p. 398, says: 'Contre les Normands tous ses fidèles, quels qu'ils fussent, montraient la même incapacité ou la même lâcheté.' But he suspects (*ibid*., p. 398, n. 1) that Hincmar's comment that the Franks had fled '*sine conflictu*' was 'une intention malveillante d'Hincmar qui détestait Robert et se réjouit de sa mort'. K. von Kalckstein, *Robert der Tapfere,* p. 101, tries to whitewash his beloved subject Robert by saying: 'Robert und Odo also hielten beide Seine-Ufer besetzt und folgten den Normannen, als sie den Fluss bis nach Melun her auffuhren. Dieselben warfen sich auf die ihnen stärker und tüchtiger scheinende Schaar unter den beiden Grafen, wir wissen nicht auf welcher Seite der Seine. Aber panischer Schrecken ergriff deren Leute, sie flohen ohne Kampf und die Normannen kehrten mit beutebeladenen Schiffen zu ihren Genossen zurück. Wahrscheinlich veranlasste ein plötzlicher Ueberfall, nicht aber Robert's Schuld die Schlappe, da Karl diesem bald darauf neue Beweise seiner Gunst gab. Doch wurde der König durch einen Unfall, der bewies, dass auch unter Führung bewährter Männer gegen die Kampfweise der Normannen wenig auszurichten war, so entmuthigt, dass er mit ihnen einen Vertrag schloss, demgemäss sie sich gegen Zahlung von 4000 Pfund Silber zum Abzug verpflichteten.' F. Lot (*ibid*., p. 398, n. 3) agrees saying that von Kalckstein 'a sans doute raison', but later he puts the blame squarely back on Robert and Odo (see F. Lot, 'Le pont de Pitres', p. 9 and n. 2). It should here be noted that Charles the Bald was probably not himself at Melun, for which see F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 398 and n. 2. For the tribute payment of 4,000 pounds of silver in 866 see *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 125-26; trans. Nelson, p. 130; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 68 and pp. 148-51; *idem*, 'The Frankish tribute payments to the Vikings', pp. 62-64; E. Joranson, *The Danegeld in France*, pp. 71-93; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 215-16.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 218. F. Lot, 'Le pont de Pitres', p. 9, n. 2, says: 'On peut supposer peut-être que Robert, rappelé contre son gré de la Transséquanie à la fin de 865, fit comme Alard, et à dessein, preuve de mauvaise volonté. Mais n'osa le disgrâcier et le renvoya dans l'Ouest.' E. Joranson, *The Danegeld in France*, pp. 68-70, presents a long argument that Robert used Melun as a way to get himself rehabilitated in Neustria; this is not the place to explore this idea more.

on Robert's advice divided the *honores* beyond the Seine [in Neustria] amongst Robert's accomplices'[1] Robert was back in Neustria although he was not to have any more success there than he had previously had.

It is not until September of 866 that we next hear of the Loire-based Northmen, the Bretons and of Robert. According to Hincmar:

> Northmen, about 400 of them, allied with the Bretons, came up from the Loire with their horses, attacked Le Mans and sacked it. On their way back they got as far as Brissarthe[2] where they came on Robert and Ranulf, and also Counts Gauzfrid and Harvey, with a strong force of warriors - had God been with them. Battle was joined, Robert was killed and Ranulf fled, stricken by a wound from which he later died. When Harvey too had been wounded and some others killed, the rest retreated to wherever their own lands were.[3]

Most of the previous historiography on this battle has been concerned either with Robert the Strong or with Salomon's Bretons. But it is most illuminating to observe that Count Ramnulf of Poitiers had combined with the recently returned Robert, who was count of Angers amongst other things, not to forget the other Neustrian: Gauzfrid of Le Mans. Obviously Ramnulf had not been able to prevent Poitiers being 'sacked without opposition' by these Loire Northmen the year before. In fact, he does not seem to have confronted them at all, but his joining forces with Robert was we may assume a way to try to avenge the recent sacking of his town and there must have been some discussions between Ramnulf and Robert beforehand to arrange this alliance. However and wherever these discussions had taken place we can imagine Ramnulf's men - called a couple of years later after his death the 'men of Poitiers' - coming on their horses from Poitiers to Angers, combining with Robert and his men and together heading towards Brissarthe to catch the Northmen returning from Le Mans.[4] That the Northmen were caught by Robert - who had probably come from his comital residence at Angers - and the others at Brissarthe which is situated on the river Sarthe midway between Le Mans and Angers would suggest that they were returning on horseback to their ship-base on the Loire, and because they had come with the Bretons to Le Mans may suggest that this ship-base lay downriver of Angers

[1] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 126; trans. Nelson, p. 131.
[2] Dep. Maine-et-Loire, arr. Segré, cant. Châteauneuf; situated on the River Sarthe between Le Mans and Angers.
[3] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 130-31; trans. Nelson, p. 135. The dating of the battle at Brissarthe to 15 September was proposed by F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 430, n.1; *idem*, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 506 and n. 4, at pp. 507-9, has been accepted by all subsequent historians.
[4] Maybe Gauzfrid was following them from Le Mans?

which was actually in Breton territory. Perhaps, therefore, they were based on the island opposite the Saint-Florent monastery at Mont-Glonne, as already discussed regarding the previous year.

Hincmar then adds: 'Ranulf and Robert had refused to accept punishment for their previous misdeeds in assuming, one the abbacy of St-Hilary, the other that of St-Martin, contrary to the rules, for they were laymen: so they deserved to suffer the retribution that befell them.'[1].

This fight at Brissarthe was also reported by the East Frankish Fulda annalist mistakenly under the year 867: 'Robert, King Charles's count, was killed at the River Loire fighting bravely against the Northmen. He was, so to speak, a second Macchabeus in our times, and if all his battles which he fought with the Bretons and the Northmen were fully described they would be on the same level as the deeds of Macchabeus.'[2] And similarly also under the same wrong year by the *Annals of Xanten*: 'That year a mighty war was waged in Gaul between the Gauls and the heathens, and a countless number fell on both sides. And Robert, a man full of vigour who

[1] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 131; trans. Nelson, p. 135. L. Musset and H. Chanteux, 'Essai sur les invasions Bretonnes et Normandes dans le Maine aux IXe et Xe siècles', *Bulletin de la Commission historique et archéologique de la Mayenne,* 29. 243 (1972-73), pp. 37-59, at p. 50 and n. 32, rather confusingly though very interestingly suggest that the Northmen's attacks and sackings of Le Mans, in the company of the Bretons, in 865 and in 866, both reported by Hincmar, were actually one and the same, and they place them both in 866 in the run-up to the battle of Brissarthe in September of the latter year. Musset says (*ibid*., p. 50): 'En 866 la flotte normande qui opérait en Loire autour d'Orléans détacha une troupe de 400 cavaliers qui, « mêlée à des Bretons » alla piller Le Mans. En regagnant la Loire, ils furent interceptés à Brissarthe, à mi-chemin de Sablé et d'Angers, par Robert le Fort, Ramnoux, comte de Poitiers, Gauzfrid, comte du Maine, et Hervé'. To explain this he notes (*ibid*., p. 50, n. 22): 'Nous croyons que c'est à tort que les *Annales de Saint-Bertin* […] dédoublent le récit de cet évènement : les deux relations sont faites en termes presque identiques (en particulier par la formule *Nortmanni … commixti Britonibus*) et ne diffèrent que l'issue - un retour paisible vers la Loire dans le premier texte et le combat de Brissarthe dans le second. La seconde nous parait n'être qu'une reprise de la première corrigée pour tenir compte d'un épisode inconnu lors de la trop hâtive rédaction d'abord insérée dans les *Annales*.' I find this rather difficult to accept. First, and most importantly, Hincmar quite clearly places the first attack on Le Mans *in 865* and not 866, and thus that the second report under the year 866 was a *reprise* of the first to correct for an unknown episode (the combat at Brissarthe) because of an initial too hasty writing (in 865!) makes little sense. Second, although it is true that both of Hincmar's reports for 865 and 866 do mention that the Northmen were accompanied by Bretons, and that the terms used were *presque identiques* (the report for 865 does say 'Nortmanni ... commixti cum Britonibus', and that for 866 says 'Nortmanni commixti Brittonibus'), this is just Hincmar using the same phrase and should not be taken to mean that he had somehow conflated or repeated the events. Third, between the two reports of the two attacks on Le Mans in two separate years Hincmar also describes another incursion by the Northmen on the Loire into Neustria in December 865 which was resisted by the Neustrian magnates Gauzfrid, Harvey and Rorgo, Musset does not mention this. In summary, I do not think we can gainsay Hincmar's reports of two raids to Le Mans. Geography is also important here. Musset states with no equivocation that the '400 cavaliers' were a detachment of the Northmen operating 'in 866' around Orléans, by which, and without mentioning it, he is implying that these Northmen were those who had attacked Orléans and Fleury in early 865, who were led as we know from Adrevald by a *dux* called Baret. If so, this might support the speculative idea mentioned earlier that Baret had stayed on the Loire until 866 and maybe even participated in the battle at Brissarthe in September of this year. However, although I am inclined to the belief that Baret had stayed on the Loire into 866, and maybe even have been responsible for the burning of Poitiers in the summer of 865, it is unlikely that he had maintained a base near to Orléans into 866. Somewhere much nearer to Angers would make more geographic sense, particularly as it is obvious that the Northmen bought by/allied with the Bretons in 866 must have previously been in a place near to the Bretons to agree to such a deal, and Orléans is much too far away for this.

[2] *AF* 867 [=866]: ed. Kurze, p. 66; trans. Reuter, p. 57.

was one of Charles's commanders and a native of Francia, was killed at this time'.[1] The *Annales Floriacenses* (*Annals of Fleury*), noticeably under the correct year of 866, say just 'Rhothberus quoque atque Ramnulfus viri mirae potentiae, armisque strenui, et inter primos ipsi priores, Northmannorum gladio necantur'.[2]

Writing at the very beginning of the tenth century, Regino of Prüm in his *Chronicon* gives a much fuller and more colourful account, once again like all the reports from the east or northeast of the Frankish realm under the wrong year of 867. I will quote it in full:

> In the year of the Lord's incarnation 867, the Northmen took over the mouth of the River Loire and began once more to plunder with great cruelty the areas of Nantes, Angers, Poitiers and Tours. Robert who held the march, and Ramnulf *dux* of Aquitaine gathered together many men and led a force against them. Realising that they were being pursued by an army, the Northmen retreated to their fleet in great haste. But when they saw the multitude of those chasing them was getting close, they realised that they could not get away and entered a certain village [*villa*] where they barricaded themselves in as well as they could in the time available. In that village there was a very large stone church into which most of the Northmen went along with their leader Hasting. Robert and Ranulf, along with their men, rushed in on them and without delay slaughtered any of them they found outside the church. When they reached the church, they saw that it was a well-fortified place and observed that there was a considerable crowd of pagans hiding inside. After a short deliberation, since the sun was already setting, they set up an encircling camp and pitched tents so that the next day they might put up ramparts and use their siege engines to assault the enemy with all their might. Boiling in the great heat, Robert set aside his helmet and armour for a moment to cool down in the breeze, and while everyone was preoccupied with setting up the camp, the Northmen suddenly burst out of their fortification and with a great cry charged at Robert and his men. But although sudden and unexpected emergencies can upset even the bravest men in battle, they nevertheless grabbed their weapons as quickly as they could, manfully fought off the enemy and forced them, retreating, to withdraw to the church. Rushing into the attack without his helmet and armour, Robert was killed in the entrance of the church because he fought without enough care and pursued the enemy without restraint. His now lifeless body was dragged

[1] *AX* 867 [=866]: ed. von Simson, p. 25. There were fights with the Northmen both in the North and in Neustria in 866, wherher all these were meant or just one area is not clear.
[2] *Annales Floriacenses* 866: *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 2, p. 254. See also Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, chap. 33, p. 71; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 172-73.

> inside by the Northmen. Also, Ranulf, who was standing some distance away observing the outcome of the battle, was seriously wounded by an arrow fired by one of the Northmen from a window in the church. He was carried away from the battle by his men and survived for barely three days. With such unhappy misfortune was this battle begun and ended. After the loss of its leader, the army was filled with sorrow and doubt in equal measure and at that very hour they lifted the siege and went home. The Northman jubilantly made for their fleet.[1]

Even allowing for the fact that Regino's date of 867 really means 866 - he must have taken this particular date from a contemporary annal such as that of Fulda - historians too many to mention have, and often just implicitly, used this information that 'Nortmanni ora Ligeris fluminis occupantes Namnetensem, Andegavensem, Pictavensem atque Turonicam provintiam […]' to assert that Hasting actually arrived on the Loire in 866. Despite the fact that no contemporary source mentions the arrival of a new fleet on the Loire in 866 this is not impossible. Yet the beginning of Regino's story seems to be a composite one perhaps covering some years. The 'province' of Anjou was certainly being plundered in 864 when Robert 'count of Anjou' fought against two companies of Northmen, in 865 in the first raid to Le Mans, then the next year (866) in the lead up to the fight at Brissarthe that Regino then goes on to relate, and even in 872-873 when the Northmen occupied Angers and were eventually besieged by Charles the Bald and the Breton Salomon, which Regino also later relates (see below). The mention of the Nantais being taken over and plundered may just be a reasonable assumption on Regino's part because any fleet entering the Loire would first arrive in the area of Nantes. But those Northmen who 'took over the mouth of the River Loire' could well have been those coming in 864 from the south and/or Baret's fleet and not necessarily 'Hasting's'.[2] One view regarding the tricky question of the situation of Nantes around this time and of its bishop Actard was given by Ferdinand Lot.[3] Another presentation with which I more tend to agree was proposed by La Borderie.[4] Poitiers itself had been threatened by Northmen in 863 who had been bought off, and was actually taken and burned in 865. That the Touraine had suffered from the Northmen

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[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 92-93; trans. MacLean, pp. 153-54.

[2] N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 32/350, says: 'The year after the Le Mans raid of 865, Salomon made contact with Hæsten (Hásteinn), one of the main commanders of the Great Army, and a joint Breton-Danish force attacked Poitou, Anjou, Maine and Touraine. Le Mans was sacked again and a Frankish army was defeated at Brissarthe, a battle in which Counts Robert and Ranulf were killed.' This is a little confusing. It is, of course, based on a belief in both Regino's *Chronicle* (for 'Poitou, Anjou, Maine and Touraine'), coupled with the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*; but which supposed 'Great Army' had Hæsten/Hásteinn belonged to, and where was it? And who were the Northmen who had accompanied the Bretons to Le Mans in 865 supposed to have been?

[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 500, n. 3; p. 501, n. 1; pp. 501-3, n. 5; pp. 503-4, n. 1; p. 504, n. 1.

[4] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 104-6.

is clear from events in previous and subsequent years; but after 853 the town itself had, as far as we can tell, never again been directly attacked much less taken, most probably because the Northmen had been paid off to leave it alone.

As already noted above, the *Annals of Fulda* say regarding this battle that if all the battles Robert fought with the Bretons and the Northmen were fully described they would be on the same level as the deeds of Macchabeus. This suggests to Simon MacLean 'that stories of his deeds were circulating in the eastern kingdom, presumably encouraged by the count's relatives', and that Regino's story here 'may have been relating one of these stories'.[1] As will be discussed a little later, Hubert Guillotel believes that Regino's *Chronicle* derived much from some 'Annales longues' written at Angers, and he reiterates this opinion regarding Regino's report of Brissarthe.[2] Ferdinand Lot also gave a great deal of attention to Brissarthe.[3] He accepts Regino's report in general in saying: 'Nous tenens le plus grand compte de cette […] chronique [Regino's]. Bien que rédigée en Lorraine, et en 908 seulement, elle présente des caractères si précis et si vraisemblables qu'elle repose visiblement sur le récit d'un témoin oculaire.'[4] On the other hand, Lot thought that this fight was really a minor skirmish which had 'un retentissement considérable dans la France occidentale et surtout dans le royaume de Lorraine et dans la France orientale, moins sans doute à cause de son importance, - ce ne fut qu'une escarmouche, en somme, - qu'en raison de la qualité de la principale victime [Robert], originaire de cette dernière contrée'.[5] That the fight at Brissarthe was just a skirmish must be doubted because Hincmar tells us that Robert, Ramnulf, Gauzfrid and Harvey had collected 'a strong force of warriors'; and even Regino says Robert and Ramnulf had 'gathered together many men'. It may be that the Neustrian and Aquitanian forces were superior to those of the Northmen because of the former's initial victory, at least according to Regino. However, the unfortunate death of Robert and the mortal wounding of Ramnulf (plus the wounding of Harvey) had clearly led to the Frankish army becoming disheartened or just scared, and as Hincmar says their retreat 'to wherever their own lands were'. All this does not really smack of some insignificant skirmish.

Ferdinand Lot also thought that the presence of 'Hasting' as the Northmen's chief was an anachronism easily explained by the fact that Regino was writing forty years after the events,

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[1] S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 154, n. 137.
[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 316.
[3] F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', pp. 427-34 and notes, which he copied with some changes and additions into his article 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 504-9.
[4] F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 427, n. 4; *idem*, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 506-7, n. 3.
[5] F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', pp. 331-32; *idem*, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 507-9.

and that 'aucun texte sûr ne signale Hasting avant 882.' Thus, having got rid of Hasting, Lot can then say in a rather typical manner: 'Le chef du raid de 866 est quelque Normand obscure dont le nom a péri au profit d'un célèbre.'[1]

Yet most historians accept that 'Hasting' was involved at Brissarthe and many of them assert that he first arrived on the Loire a little earlier in 866, but, if so, where might he have come from?[2]

Homing in on the year 866 to start with, one real possibility for any arrival on the Loire of any Scandinavian fleet in this year is in connection the Northmen who had left the Seine in July 866. Hincmar tells us that:

> In June [of 866] the Northmen moved from the island near the monastery of St-Denis and sailed down the Seine until they reached a place suitable for making repairs to their ships and for building new ones, and there they awaited the payment of the sum due to them. Charles marched to the place called Pîtres with workmen and carts to complete the fortifications, so that the Northmen might never again be able to get up the Seine beyond that point […]. In July the Northmen reached the sea. One group of them returned for a while to the Ijssel district [in Frisia][3] and enjoyed everything they wanted, except that they did not manage to make an open alliance with Lothar.[4]

As I and others have explored, one group or perhaps even both groups of these Northmen had clearly gone to England to join the earliest contingent of the so-called Great Army, either before the capture of York in November 866 but certainly before the defeat of the Northumbrian kings

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[1] F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 428, n. 2, *idem*, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 505, n. 1. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 69-70, closely and explicitly follows Lot's line: 'Despite the views of most commentators, Regino's detailed account of the battle cannot be trusted: he wrongly dated the encounter to 867; he apparently knew nothing of the presence of the Bretons, the raid on Le Mans, or the fact that the raiders were mounted, and he claimed that the Vikings were commanded by Hasting, a notorious leader by the time Regino was writing, but not attested on the Continent by other sources before 882.' Actually Hasting (or *Alsting*) was not at all 'a notorious leader' when Regino was writing his *Chronicle* in about 908; in fact his notoriety was only created or proclaimed a century later in the stories of Dudo of Saint-Quentin. Responding to Lot's statement that 'Hasting' is not securely proveable (*sicher nachweisbar*) in any text before 882 and is an anachronism of Regino, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 218. n. 3, says that this view is not founded enough and: 'Chronologisch steht dem Auftreten Hastings schon 866 nichts entgegen und Regino, über diese Gegenden anerkanntermaßen gut unterrichet, weiß auch sonst noch allerhand von ihn zu erzählen (874, statt 868)' ('Chronologically nothing stands against Hasting's appearance in 866, and Regino was recognisably well informed about these regions, and also knows enough to often talk about him [Hasting] elsewhere (874, instead of 868 [*sic*].')

[2] As was discussed in Chapter 5 we really must ignore Dudo of Saint-Quentin's mythic and composite story of *Alstignus* leading a fleet on a campaign to the Mediterranean.

[3] Most probably they returned to *the Hollandse Ijssel* rather than the *Gelderse Ijssel*; for which see S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', p. 16, and the references given therein.

[4] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 127; trans. Nelson 1991, pp. 130-31.

Ælle and Osberht in the spring of 867.[1] But whilst that part of the Northmen's fleet which left the Seine in the summer of 866, and which went back to Frisia for a short time, which was possibly led by the chieftain Rodulf/Ubba, seems indeed to have gone thereafter to Northumbria in northern England, the other part could really have gone anywhere, maybe even to the Loire.

In response to the myriad of French and other historians who have suggested that 'Hasting' arrived on the Loire in 866 before taking part in the fight at Brissarthe on 15 September we might just ask this: Where else could he have come from if he had not arrived on the Loire from the Seine?[2] If he really did so then I think we must seek his origin before 865-66 either in Denmark or, equally if not more likely, in Frisia, because of the undoubted connection of these Northmen on the Seine with Frisia and the Northmen of Danish origin operating there at the time.[3]

Finally, Ramnulf's joining with Robert the Strong had probably been prompted by the sack of Poitiers the year before, an attack that may very well have been led by Baret. If Hasting had arrived in 866 before the raid on Le Mans and the battle at Brissarthe in September then this may imply that there had been a change in the Scandinavian forces operating on and from the Loire. Had Baret left and Hasting arrived? Or had Hasting taken over the primary leadership of

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[1] See S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 17-19; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 213; A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great*, p. 19; R. P. Abels, *Alfred the Great*, p. 114; P. H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, p. 101; *idem*, *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire*, p. 92; S. McLeod, *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England*, p. 132; J. de Vries, *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 298-301, 393. As I say in 'Rodulf and Ubba', p. 17: 'I believe that all these historians were right in suggesting that at least one part of the Danish army and fleet leaving the Seine in the summer 866 subsequently became a part of the early so-called Great Army in England - whether this was the part that did 'go back' to Frisia or the part that did not, or both.'

[2] Accepting just for the sake of argument that a 'new' Scandinavian fleet arrived along the Loire in 866, whether led by 'Hasting' or some other 'Normand obscure', to use Lot's words, the only other origin apart from the Seine it could have had is it being all or a part of Sigfrid's force from the Charente, which we last hear anything about in late 865 fleeing back to their ships. This is not inconceivable although I do think, as I have argued elsewhere, that this Sigfrid himself was quite possibly the same person as the Sigfrid who became joint king of Denmark, probably in the late 860s, and who is first attested in 873 with his brother Hálfdan: see S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark'. But if this option had been the case, might it also suggest that Hasting/Alsting had a Danish origin, as had Sigfrid? This is just a thought for future consideration.

[3] See again S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', p. 16. For a related though somewhat different take on this matter see A. Gautier, 'Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs?', p. 32. Of course it should be remembered that Rodulf Glaber (Raoul Glaber in French), writing in Burgundy in the eleventh century, would have Hasting (*Astingus*) as being a *renégat* born of a peasant family in the region of Troyes: cf. Raoul Glaber, *Histoires*, trans. M. Arnoux (Turnhout, 1996), pp. 70-72; *Raoul Glaber: les cinq livres de ses histoires (900-1044)*, ed. M. Prou (Paris, 1886), book 1, chap. 19, p. 18: 'In processu quoque temporis ortus est vir quidam in pago Trecassino ex infimo rusticorum genere Astingus nomine, in vico videlicet qui Tranquillus dicitur'; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 314, n. 2. According to P. Bouet ('Hasting, le Viking pervers selon Dudon de Saint-Quentin', *Annales de Normandie*, 62. 2 (2012), pp. 213-33, at p. 216, n. 5): 'L'origine champenoise de Hasting, proposée par Raoul Glaber […] ne peut être retenue: l'historien a confondu Hasting avec certains Francs chrétiens passés du côté des pillards nordiques.' This may or may not have been the case. The whole dossier concerns here the fantastic and completely unhistorical story in Dudo's *De moribus* that Hasting (*Alstignus*), acting now as a Frankish intermediary met with the Northmen (supposedly) of Rollo who had recently arrived on the Seine (see Dudo: ed. Lair, book 2, chap. 13-14, pp. 154-56; trans. Christiansen, pp. 36-38). The idea that Hasting ever crossed paths with Rollo's Northmen should be much doubted if not rejected.

the Loire Northmen previously led by Baret? Or had things played out in another way? These questions can never really be answered and I thus leave such speculations here.

Breton matters and an attack on Bourges

Following the withdrawal of the Northmen from the Seine in July 866 at a price of 4,000 pounds of silver, Charles was preoccupied during the rest of the year with his ongoing struggle with his half-brother Louis the German,[1] although in October, immediately after the fight at Brissarthe, Charles had moved quickly to replace Robert the Strong with Hugh the Abbot, Charles's own cousin.[2] But by the early spring of 867 he was ready to attend again to the situation in Aquitaine. Around the middle of Lent, *circa* 6 March, 'he went to the *villa* of Pouilly on the Loire;[3] and he summoned the leading men of Aquitaine to meet, and set his son Louis [the Stammerer] over those Aquitanians as king, assigning him household officers from his own palace'.[4] After returning north by the end of March, for the next months the king was concerned with holding talks at Metz with Louis the German and with the ongoing saga of his 866 reinstatement of Wulfad to the archbishopric of Bourges.[5] Yet by early summer Charles felt able to turn his attention once again to Salomon's troublesome Bretons. As Hincmar reported it:

> He announced a general summoning of the host throughout his whole realm, and gave notice that his assembly would be on 1 August at Chartres, from where he would advance into Brittany to subdue the Breton chief Salomon. Meanwhile envoys went to and fro between them until they managed to make peace terms on the condition that, after Charles had given hostages, Salomon's son-in-law Pascwethen, on whose advice he relied heavily, should come to Charles at Compiègne around 1 August, and both parties thereafter should stick to whatever was then settled and confirmed there, but that the

[1] Cf. *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 132-34; trans. Nelson, pp. 135-36.
[2] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 132; trans. Nelson, p. 136. After reporting Robert's death, Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, ed. Kurze, pp. 92-93; trans. MacLean, pp. 154-55, says: 'Not much later Hugh the Abbot was substituted in Robert's place. He was vigorous, humble, just, peaceful and fundamentally honest in all his ways. Since Odo and Robert, Robert's sons, were still very young at the time of their father's death his command [*ducatus*] was not committed to them.' For Hugh and his long career see in the first instance K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo'; É. Bourgeois, *Hugues l'abbé,* both old works but still very useful, and see also K. F. Werner, 'Gauzlin von Saint-Denis und die westfränkische Reichsteilung von Amiens (März 880), Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte von Odos Königtum', *Deutsches Archiv*, 35 (1979), pp. 395-462; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 177-79; S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, pp. 65-67, 103-5, 116-17; F. Lot, 'Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve', p. 435, n. 3.
[3] Pouilly-sur-Loire, dep. Nièvre, situated on the Upper Loire north of Nevers.
[4] *AB* 867: ed. Grat, p. 135; trans. Nelson, p. 138. For Charles's influence in Aquitaine in and around this time compare J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 190-220; *eadem*, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p.138, n. 2; J. Martindale, 'Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine', in M. T. Gibson and J. L. Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald. Court and Kingdom*, pp. 126-32; É. Bourgeois, *Hugues l'abbé*; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 360-63.
[5] *AB* 867: ed. Grat, p. 135-37; trans. Nelson, p. 138 and n. 3, p. 139; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 218.

people who had been summoned to the host should meanwhile stay at home in a state of readiness and, if it proved necessary and the king required it, they should come to Chartres on 25 August prepared to go on campaign [...]. Charles, having given hostages, received Salomon's envoy Pascwethen at Compiègne on 1 August. He granted to Pascwethen, in his capacity as Salomon's representative, the county of Coutances with all the fiscal lands, royal *villae* and abbeys therein and properties wheresover pertaining to it, except for the bishopric; and Charles confirmed this with a solemn oath sworn by all his leading men. In return, he received from Salomon's representative acting on his behalf a solemn oath of fidelity and peace and guaranteed help against his enemies, on the condition that Salomon and his son should hold this grant along with those he held previously and should show themselves faithful men to Charles and his son.[1]

We do not know who had begun the sending of envoys. Was Salomon frightened or did Charles really feel too weak to mount a successful campaign against the Bretons? I tend to the latter view, as after all Salomon had not deigned to come in person to meet the king, and even before his envoy Pascweten (his son-in-law) arrived at Compiègne on 1 August the order for the host to be mustered had been cancelled, just with the proviso that 'if it proved necessary' they should come to Chartres on 25 August; obviously it did not prove necessary and Pascweten had managed to extract a 'treaty' greatly to the advantage of the Bretons. According to Cassard:

[1] *AB* 867: ed. Grat, pp. 136-37; trans. Nelson, pp. 139-40. Cf. also *Hincmari archiepiscopi Remensis epistolarum pars prior*, ed. E. Perels, *MGH*, *Epistolae Karolini aevi*, 6, no. 198, p. 206. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 70: 'The King was probably encouraged by news of a notable victory won in mid-July by the Lotharingians, who succeeded in temporarily expelling Rorik from Frisia.' This is a nice conjecture regarding what prompted Charles's action, although perhaps we should not impute such motivations. But certainly by 867 local Frisian inhabitants called *Cokingi* had driven Rorik out of Frisia and King Lothar feared he would return 'bringing some Danes to help him' (*AB* 867: ed. Grat, p. 137; trans. Nelson, pp. 139-40). J. de Vries's theory (see *De Wikingen in de lage Landen*, pp. 200-3) was that Ubba *dux* of the Frisians, whom I identify elsewhere with Rorik's nephew Rodulf (see S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba'), had depleted Rorik's forces in Frisia when he went to England, and this left Rorik too weak to resist the native *Cokingi*. S. McLeod, *The Beginning of Scandinavian Settlement in England*, p. 138, makes a similar point: 'It may be worth considering the recorded expulsion of Roric from Frisia, in 867. If any of Roric's followers decided to sail to England they could have joined the great army in York in the first half of 867, perhaps explaining the notice of a Frisian leader in York in the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto*.' We do not know where Rorik went and precisely when he returned - he was still away from Frisia in 868. For Rorik's temporary expulsion from Frisia by the *Cokingi* in 867 as well as the notice in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin s.a.* 867 see *inter alia*: I. H. Gosses, 'Hodere, Kok, Hauding, Pugil, Cokingi', and *idem*, 'Deensche heerschappijen in Friesland gedurende den Noormannentijd', both in F. Gosses and J. F. Niermeyer (eds.), *Verspreide Geschriften* (Groningen/Batavia, 1946), pp. 369-401, at p. 392 and pp. 130-51; D. J. Henstra, *Friese graafschappen tussen Zwin en Wezer. Een overzicht van grafelijkheid in middeleeuws Frisia (ca. 700-1200)* (Assen, 2012), p. 60 and n. 63; D. P. Blok, 'De Wikingen in Friesland', *Naamkunde*, 10 (1978), pp. 25-47, at p. 30; S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers', p. 99; H. Jaekel, *Die Grafen von Mittelfriesland aus dem Geschlechte König Radbods* (Gotha, 1895); W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 224-25 and notes; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of Saint-Bertin*, p. 140, n. 8.

> C'est Salomon qui mène le jeu, il laisse Charles aux abois s'abaisser à lui faire des ouvertures de paix et ne daigne même pas se déplacer en personne jusqu'au souverain franc vers lequel il délègue son gendre, le comte de Vannes Pascweten. Derrière les explications de l'annaliste, trop méticuleuses pour ne pas être embarrassées, on sent un Salomon sûr de sa force, arrogant, un tantinet méprisant même pour un souverain qui n'ose pas l'affronter en face. L'insistance mise sur la livraison d'otages garants de la sécurité de Pascweten marque aussi qui est le demandeur : quelques décennies plus tôt, c'était l'empereur qui exigeait des Bretons des otages en gage de leur fidélité, et leur livraison se faisait sans contrepartie ! Le contenu du traité n'est pas moins important : Salomon se trouve officiellement exempt du versement du tribut ; cette vieille revendication des maîtres de l'Occident chrétien est purement et simplement jetée aux oubliettes. De plus le Cotentin, et nécessairement l'Avranchin, qui était peut-être déjà en cours d'annexion, viennent s'ajouter à tout ce qui avait été abandonné aux Bretons à Entrammes en 863. Contre ce qui pourrait passer pour une clause de style, l'engagement à ne pas nuire à Charles, Salomon est reconnu comme un monarque pratiquement indépendant dans son royaume.[1]

According to Guillotel:

> L'ampleur de la concession montre que les possibilités d'initiatives dont le roi pouvait user étaient quasi inexistantes. Hugues l'Abbé, nommé depuis trop peu de temps, n'avait pas encore eu la possibilité d'affirmer ses talents militaires ; il faut donc s'accorder coûte que coûte. Salomon traitait presque d'égal à égal avec le roi ; comme cette fois-ci il n'y avait pas de rencontre en marche, il avait refusé de se rendre auprès du roi et s'était fait représenter par son gendre Pascweten, dont la sécurité était assurée par l'envoi d'otages. La cession du Cotentin impliquait l'abandon préalable de l'Avranchin qui le séparait du comté de Rennes, or les Annales de Saint-Bertin n'en parlent jamais ; il faut donc supposer que les Bretons s'étaient emparés.[2]

This cession of the Cotentin was quite an achievement for the Bretons, 'De façon incontestable le traité de Compiègne marque le vrai apogée du royaume breton'.[3] It only remained for Salomon to gain the title of king, which he did the next year as we will see below. Salomon was to remain faithful to Charles until his death in 874, about which Cassard states: 'En définitive

[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 78.
[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 317-18.
[3] J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 78.

le miracle sera pour Charles que le roi breton demeure jusqu'à sa fin respectueux de son engagement à coopérer. Envisagé sous cet angle, le pari forcé de Compiègne sera gagné pour le fils de Louis le Pieux.'[1]

But what about the Loire-based Northmen whom Salomon had hired or allied with in both 865 and 866? It had clearly been these combined raids which pressured Charles to think about advancing into Brittany to subdue Salomon in the summer of 867 - although eventually through weakness preferring to talk and concede the Cotentin.[2]

The only raid by any Northmen we hear about in 867 was on Bourges in Aquitanian Berry. The local *Annals of Massay* simply say: '867 […] Biturix eodem anno a paganis vastatur et incenditur', '867 [...] In this year pagans sacked and burned Bourges'.[3] As has been noted in an earlier chapter this attack was also alluded to by Adrevald of Fleury, who after telling of the raids in late 863 to early 864, culminating in the attack on Clermont and the killing of Count Stephen, added that the Northmen even (later) came and attacked Bourges the *caput* of the Aquitanian realm ('ipsumque Avaricum, caput regni Aquitanici').[4] It has also been several times observed in the present work that the *Annals of Massay* are up to this point quite often one year too late; could this also be the case here, as queried for instance by Walther Vogel?[5] In this case, however, I think the Massay annalist being locally based may have got his dating correct here.[6] There is little doubt that this attack on Bourges was conducted from the Loire[7] and the Northmen would have used the river Cher to get to Bourges.

Sometime following the battle at Brissarthe, and possibly also the Neustrian appointment of Hugh the Abbot thereafter, the Bretons had clearly felt that they had got what they wanted from the Loire Northmen and decided they no longer needed their services or help. The Northmen had been severely mauled at Brissarthe and now, without an employer or ally, and perhaps fearing the Neustrians now under Hugh, they sought new places where to enrich themselves. It may not have been a coincidence that if their raid on Bourges really did take place in 867 they had heard about King Charles's visit to the *villa* of Pouilly-sur-Loire, just east of Bourges, in March, where he set his young son Louis the Stammerer over the Aquitanians, and then of his

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 79.
[2] *Ibid*., pp. 78-79: 'Les coups sévères portés à l'aristocratie de la Francie et la menace persistante des Vikings suffisent à expliquer la mansuétude de Charles le Chauve, qui dut pourtant paraître aux yeux de beaucoup comme un nouvel aveu de faiblesse. Mais une autre considération doit aussi entrer en ligne de compte : la puissance militaire de Salomon qui est alors à la tête des troupes les plus nombreuses et les plus aguerries de la région.'
[3] *Annales Masciacenses*, p. 169.
[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, chap. 33, p. 73; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 176-77.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 226, n. 2.
[6] Most historians accept the date of 867; see for example J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 149, n. 18; *eadem*, *Charles the Bald*, p. 212; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 71.
[7] Cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 226; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 71.

withdrawal northwards, and decided that with the king and his men gone from the area the turmoil in Aquitanian Bourges could provide a good opportunity to exploit the situation? It may well also be that the attack on Bourges in 867 was the reason why at the end of the year Charles 'took away the county of Bourges from Count Gerald, in his absence and without making any allegation against him, and granted it to Egfrid instead',[1] 'perhaps for failure to counter a Viking attack' says Janet Nelson.[2]

868: Orléans and Poitou

The Northmen on the Loire started 868 with a raid which took place before Easter, probably in March. According to Hincmar, 'Northmen sailed up the Loire, reached Orléans and having accepted a ransom, returned to their base unscathed'.[3] According to Adrevald of Fleury on this 'third' raid to Orléans the town was 'tertio distracta', which Davril translates as that the *civitas* was 'la troisième fois détruite'.[4] Simon Coupland says of it: 'In the spring of 868, probably in March, the Vikings on the Loire once again pillaged and burned Orléans before returning to their base unopposed.'[5]

But as was mentioned in Chapter 4[6] Coupland earlier argued that the verb *distrahere* used by Adrevald of Fleury (*tertio distracta*) 'does not mean to plunder, but to sell',[7] which, if so, would perhaps accord with Hincmar's statement that the Northmen 'accepted a ransom'.

Just as in the previous year after Salomon had apparently no longer wanted to buy their services and they (the Northmen) had made a raid into Berry to Bourges, and particularly after Salomon (through his envoy Pascweten) had concluded a most advantageous agreement with Charles in August, this raid to Orléans was just a return to independent business as usual, raiding for profit.

It is possible that during 868 these Northmen also plundered along the coast of Lower Poitou or at least that their presence in Upper Poitou caused insecurity a little further southwest.[8]

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[1] *AB* 867: ed. Grat, pp. 140-41; trans. Nelson, p. 143.
[2] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 212. Charles was back at Pouilly in early 868 to try to dislodge Gerald: *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 141; trans. Nelson, p. 143. Gerald was not finally removed from Bourges until 872: *AB* 872: ed. Grat, pp. 185-86; trans. Nelson, p. 177. See also J. Martindale, 'Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine', p. 131.
[3] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 143; trans. Nelson, p. 144.
[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 36, pp. 78-79; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 182-83.
[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 71.
[6] See p. 152 and nn. 7, 9.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[8] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 211.

After talking of the successful defence of Poitiers in 868, which will be discussed shortly, Marcel Garaud says:

> Si l'événement semble avoir arrêté les incursions des Normands dans le Haut-Poitou, les dévastations paraissent avoir continué, au contraire, dans le Bas-Poitou. A une date ultérieure, mais indéterminée, les moines de Saint-Vivien évacuèrent, par crainte des pirates, leur couvent, situé auprès du château de Gravion (Castellum Gravionem), dans la région des Sables-d'Olonne.[1] Ils trouvèrent un refuge à Clermont en Auvergne jusqu'à ce que l'évêque de cette ville, Agilmar, leur eût assigné un nouveau monastère en Bourgogne (Biarne-Saint-Vivant, entre Dôle et Auxonne).[2]

This idea is based on a *Life of Saint Viventii* (Vivien/Vivent/Vivant/Vincent).[3] This translation from the Vendée to Clermont has often been placed in 868,[4] sometimes it is even said that the *Life* places it precisely in this year[5] which it does not.[6] Marcel Garaud was quite right to say

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[1] J. Marilier, 'Saint-Vivant de Vergy', *Mémoire de la Commission des antiquités de la Côte-d'Or* (1970-1971), pp. 109-25, at p. 110: 'Ce « château de Gravion » était sans doute une vieille fortification sur une butte-témoin de la vallée du Graon, occupée aujourd'hui par le village de Saint-Vincent-sur-Graon.'

[2] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 257.

[3] See for example *Vita sancti Viventii Presbyteri*, *AA*, *SS*, Januarii II (Paris, 1863), pp. 85-96, at chap. 8, p. 95. M. Garaud (*ibid*, n. 2), says this whole 'récit' was composed at the beginning of the tenth century. I am not as sure about this dating as Garaud, particularly because the *Life/Legend* goes on to tell of how some years later other Northmen came into Burgundy and burnt the monastery at Biarne-Saint-Vivant, forcing the monks to flee, but who were beaten by *duc* Richardo, that is the count of Autun and duke of Burgundy Richard the Justiciar (d. 921) the the older brother of Boso of Provence, and that later they went to the *pagus* of Chartres. The initial Northmen are said to have been led by a *princeps* called *Asting*: 'Astingo Normannorum Principe'. It not my intention here to enter into a discussion of different incursions into Burgundy by Northmen coming from the Seine; there were in fact three around this time. It appears to me that the whole 'Burgundian' part of the life and legend of Saint Vivent is a late and composite one, combining information from three real historical incursions into Burgundy, all from the Seine: In 886-87 when some of the Great Army besieging Paris had been induced by Charles the Fat to move into Burgundy, and from Sens they had 'ranged as far as the Saône and the Loire', and remembering Biarne-Saint-Vivant is situated just east of the Saône (see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 338-39 and notes); in late 898 when Richard the Justiciar did actually defeat them at Argenteuil (south of Tonnerre, dep. Yonne, on the river Armançon) (see *ibid*., p. 381 and n. 2, p. 382); and perhaps in 910 when other Northmen (perhaps here Rollo's) possibly did come to Burgundy and also attacked near Bourges in Berry, before arriving at Chartres in 911 where they were besieged (see *ibid*., pp. 394-97 and notes); although in a future article (now in preparation) I will explore and contest the latter case.

[4] See for example W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 227-28. Maurice Chaume dates the arrival in the county of Amous to 868, see M. Chaume, *Les origines du duché de Bourgogne*, *Première partie* : *Histoire politique* (Dijon, 1925), p. 338. I tend to doubt this. Even if the community left the Vendée in this year (and it may have been later), I believe they must have stayed at Clermont for a while before moving to Burgundy, to the future Biarne-Saint-Vivant.

[5] For example J. Marilier, 'Saint-Vivant de Vergy', p. 110: 'Comme tant d'autres s'enfuirent au IXe siècle devant les incursions des Normands. Avec le corps du saint, le matériel liturgique et les ustensiles ménagers, ils prirent la route de l'intérieur, en 868 précise le document.'

[6] In fact, the Life/Translations before talking of this translation from Gravion give a whole potted history of the Northmen's incursions (and indeed those of the Hungarians) from the time of Charles the Bald, mentioning first their arrival in the northern part of Gaul (in 841), their coming by sea to more southerly parts (from 843) and all the way through the reign of his son Louis the Stammerer, and (missing out Louis III and Carloman) to the time of Charles III 'the Fat'. It is here that the year '868' is introduced but this is clearly a mistake for 886: see *Vita sancti Viventii*, p. 95 and n. b.

that it happened at an indeterminable date, this could well have been 868 but it could have been a little later, even in 870.[1]

Whether such an incursion into Lower Poitou really took place, and whether the year was 868 or later, in mid-August of this earlier year Charles the Bald held an assembly once again at Pîtres. Here he received the three Aquitanian *markiones* called Bernard, that is Bernard of Toulouse, Bernard of Gothia and another Bernard.[2] This was likely 'linked with the setting-up of Louis the Stammerer's sub-kingdom' in 867.[3] Regarding the Frankish government of Aquitaine all this is of the utmost importance, but our concern here is with the Northmen. At the same August assembly at Pîtres, Hincmar in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* reports that Charles also met there with 'an envoy of the Breton chieftain Salomon, through whom Salomon told Charles that he ought not to launch an assault himself against the Northmen on the Loire, because he, Salomon, was ready to attack them with a strong force of Bretons and only needed some help on Charles's part. In response the king sent ahead Engelram, his chamberlain and master of the door-keepers and his closest counsellor, with a crown made of gold and adorned with precious stones and all kinds of gear designed for regal display'.[4] This is Charles finally acknowledging Salomon's royal status. J.-C. Cassard quite rightly says: 'Charles profite de l'occasion qui lui est donnée pour reconnaître de façon solennelle la dignité de roi subordonné concédée à Salomon puisque le titre seul manquait à son palmarès depuis l'année précédente. Prenant exemple sur les habitudes de la chancellerie royale franque, le nouveau promu peut apposer dès le 29 août le « seing de Salomon roi de Bretagne » au bas de la charte n° 240 de Redon.'[5]

Nevertheless, Charles did send some token help to Salomon. He 'sent his son Carloman, deacon and abbot, with a squadron of household troops, as Salomon had asked him [...]. The squadron (*scara*)[6] which Charles sent with Carloman across the Seine laid waste some territory, it is true, but did nothing of any use as far as resisting the Northmen was concerned - and that

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[1] As will be noted a little later on, there are no reported attacks by the Loire Northmen in 870. Bishop Agilmar of Clermont is only attested at the earliest from his participation at the councils of Chalon-sur-Saône in 875 and Ponthion in 876. He may have become bishop in 873 and probably died in 891: see B. Gonod, *Chronologie des évêques de Clermont et des principaux événements de l'histoire ecclésiastique de l'Auvergne* (Clermont-Ferrand, 1833), p. 21.

[2] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 151; trans. Nelson, p .151.

[3] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 151, n. 21; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolinginne*, pp. 360-63.

[4] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 151; trans. Nelson, pp.151-52.

[5] J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 79. See also A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 319. For a different view of Breton 'royalty' at this time see J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 138-46.

[6] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 214, defines this *scara* as a 'rapid-deployment force'; see also *eadem*, 'A tale of two princes: politics, text and ideology in a Carolingian annal', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 10 (1988), pp. 105-41, at p. 109. See also the discussion of the term by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 92-93.

after all was the purpose for which they had been sent. On King Charles's orders they came back and each returned to his own home'.[1]

As we have seen, Salomon had been granted the Cotentin the year before and the fact that the squadron of troops led by Carloman was of no use against the Loire-based Northmen and was recalled was, as Hubert Guillotel says, 'largement compensée par la concession du titre royal'.[2] It could well be that Salomon was 'all ready to attack' the Northmen 'with a strong force Bretons', as his envoy had told Charles at Pîtres, but what is abundantly clear is that the Bretons did not confront the Loire Northmen during the year. We do not know the reason. It is possible that it was because the Northmen were not on the Loire at the time, maybe they really were in Lower Poitou.

But later in the same year, probably in late autumn, the Northmen came once again towards Poitiers. Hincmar wrote:

> The men of Poitiers offered prayers to God and St Hilary and boldly attacked those Northmen [of the Loire] for a third time (*tertio*).[3] They killed some of them and drove the rest to take flight. They gave a tenth of all their booty to St-Hilary, and that was not counting voluntary offerings.[4]

We do not know which route the Loire Northmen took this time to head towards Poitiers. Walther Vogel believed that they had come from the 'south', by which he actually means that they had first been raiding along the coasts and interior of Lower Poitou.[5] Marcel Garaud says:

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[1] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 151; trans. Nelson p. 152. For Carloman see J. L. Nelson, 'A tale of two princes: politics, text and ideology in a Carolingian annal'. S. Coupland (*Unpublished book*, expanded from *Charles the Bald*, p. 71) says: 'When the [Northmen's] fleet on the Loire once again pillaged and burned Orléans in the spring of 868, probably in March, the Breton leader sent word to Charles that he would attack the Northmen as soon as the King despatched a Frankish force in support. The Vikings were probably encamped on an island in the Loire between Nantes and Angers, where the river formed the boundary between Salomon's territory and the West Frankish kingdom. Although Charles responded at once, sending his son Carloman at the head of a squadron, the Franks merely ravaged the countryside and offered no effectual resistance to the invaders. As a result, Salomon delayed his campaign until the following year, and Charles the Bald ordered the Frankish squadron home.' The dating seems to be a little awry here because Charles first sent Engelram and then Carloman after he had arrived at Pîtres in mid-August, there is no reason to believe that 'Salomon sent word to Charles that he would attack the Northmen' shortly after the attack on Orléans in about March or as a consequence of it (Orléans was well outside Salomon's realm). Salomon's envoy probably only set out from Brittany for Pîtres in late July or in August. Furthermore, that the Northmen were at the time 'encamped on an island in the Loire between Nantes and Angers' is purely an assumption. Certainly, Angers was 'where the river formed the boundary between Salomon's territory and the West Frankish kingdom', but Orléans was far away, as was Poitiers and even Lower Poitou.

[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 319.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 229, n. 1, followed by M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 257, n. 1, suggest that *tertio* probably more meant 'thirdly' rather than 'a third time'. In any case this was not the third time Poitiers had been attacked but the fourth. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 71, n. 131 goes with 'third time'.

[4] *AB* 868: ed. Grat, p. 151; trans. Nelson, p. 152.

[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 228.

'Trois ans ne s'étaient pas écoulés [from 865] que les Normands de la Loire pénétraient encore une fois dans le Haut-Poitou. Mal leur en prit. Plus heureux ou plus vaillants qu'en 865, les Poitevins marchèrent contre eux et les mirent en déroute. Attribuant ce succès à l'intervention du bienheureux Hilaire, ils lui offrirent, après des actions de grâces, la dîme du butin qu'ils enlevèrent aux païens.'[1] While not being explicit this seems to suggest that the move towards Poitiers came from the north, from the Loire itself.[2]

Of course, this final and unsuccessful attack towards Poitiers had been valiantly beaten off by the 'men of Poitiers' and without the assistance of any royal host. Nevertheless, it seems that the Northmen's presence in Poitou had prompted the monks of the monastery of Saint-Maixent (dep. Deux-Sèvres) to remove the remains of their patron saint to Salomon's *villa* and newly established monastery at Plélan where the monks of Redon were supposedly already in exile.[3] Given the location of Saint-Maixent this may strengthen the view that the Northmen were indeed active in Lower Poitou in 868 or even in early 869.

Deals with the Bretons

At the beginning of 869 Charles the Bald travelled to Cosne-sur-Loire, a 'characteristic frontier-spot for Aquitaine, and equidistant between Auxerre and Bourges',[4] where he met some

[1] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des normands en Poitou', p. 257.

[2] As mentioned earlier, Marcel Garaud seems to place the incursion into Lower Poitou *after* the victory of the men of Poitiers hence either in late 868 or early 869.

[3] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 241, pp. 189-92. J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 80: 'C'est là [at Plélan] aussi que Salomon hébergera en 869 les moines de Saint-Maixent fuyant leur Poitou: la Bretagne paraît sous son règne une possible terre d'asile.' If Brittany appears to have been a land of asylum at this time it must be because there were few if any Northmen there. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 72, says: 'The body was installed in its new home at Plélan on Sunday, 17 April 869 in the presence of the Breton leader, who also gave the abbey a number of magnificent presents, including a gold chalice and paten, a gold cross and several books, among them a Life of St Maxentius.' However, Coupland's analysis of these events is for me somewhat confusing. He says (*ibid.*, pp. 71-72): 'Even though the Viking expedition to Poitiers ended in defeat it was presumably news of their approach which caused the local communities of St Maixent and St Benoît-de-Quinçay to flee with the relics of their patrons. The monks of St Benoît took the body of St Viventius to Clermont, while the remains of St Maxentius were somehow acquired by Salomon for the monastery at Plélan.' In the case of the community at Saint-Maixent, which was not really so local to Poitiers, the community may have fled to Brittany because of the Northmen attacking Poitiers but, as I have suggested earlier, perhaps in 868 the Northmen had, as well, made incursions into Lower Poitou, much nearer to Saint-Maixent. In regard to the monks of Saint-Benoît-de-Quinçay near Poitiers, Coupland here is confusing the flight of the monks of Saint-Benedict at Gravion in the Vendée to Clermont as told of in the *Life of Saint Viventii* with a report in the *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* under the conglomerate year of 877 that the 'Cella Sancti Benedicti Quinciaci destructa' (see *La Chronique de Saint-Maixent*, ed. J. Verdon, p. 68). If the *cella* of Saint-Benoît-de-Quinçay (which was founded by Saint Philibert; for which see I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 199, 215) was destroyed before 877 it was not necessarily in 868; 863, 865 or even 857 are equally, perhaps more, possible. But in any case, it had nothing to do with the flight from Gravion to Clermont which supposedly happened in 868.

[4] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 153. n. 1. J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 212, n. 124, says: 'The non-appearance of these three at Cosne-sur-Loire in January 869 [was] not [because of] their disloyalty but [can be blamed] on Charles's bad timing.'

Aquitanians although this time the three Bernards did not come so he returned to Senlis 'having achieved nothing'.[1]

Salomon had said the year before that he was ready to fight the Northmen which he had not actually done, perhaps because they were nowhere near Brittany, but by 24 May 869 he had once again gathered his Breton forces together in the district of Avessac (dep. Loire-Atlantique) east of Redon on the Nantes side of the Vilaine, where a Redon charter tells us that he was 'ready to do battle against the Northmen',[2] again! We do not know if Salomon actually did battle with the Northmen, it is to be doubted, but it is clear that his mobilisation was not at all successful because later in the year, probably in September, and according to Hincmar: 'Salomon chief of the Bretons made a peace with the Northmen (*pacem cum Nortmannis ... fecit*), on the Loire, and along with his Bretons harvested wine from his part of the county of Anjou.'[3] That a *pax* was made between the Bretons and the Northmen strongly suggests a tribute was paid by Salomon.[4] Coupland suggests: 'Whatever the sum paid by Salomon, he evidently gained concessions from the Vikings in return, for the treaty enabled him to harvest the wine from his estates in Anjou in the autumn.'[5]

It is frequently maintained by historians that this 'peace' reported by Hincmar is probably reflected in an interpolated story of Regino of Prüm which evidently took place sometime before 874, probably in 869.[6] This story starts as follows:

> One winter, Salomon pitched camp against the Northmen in order to protect the frontiers of his kingdom from their incursions. One day when he had been there for some time and was holding a discussion among his men about the daring and hardness of the Northmen, the aforementioned Wrhwant [Gurwant],[7] overestimating his own strength, arrogantly boasted that if the king withdrew with the army then he would dare to stay behind at the

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[1] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, p. 152; trans. Nelson, p. 153.

[2] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 242, p. 193: 'Factum est hoc in pago namnetico, plebe Clarizac ubi Salomon et omnes Britones contra Normandos [*sic*] in procinctu belli erant …' On 17 April Salomon had been at Plélan-le-Grand (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine, arr. Montford); see *ibid*., no. 241, pp. 189-92.

[3] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, p. 166; trans. Nelson, p. 163.

[4] See P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 59 and n. 4; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 72.

[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 73.

[6] For this opinion see *inter alia* J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 163, n. 26; S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 171, n. 210; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 232 and n. 1; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 26-27; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 355; N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 34/352; W. Davies, *Small Worlds: The Village Community in Early Medieval Brittany* (London, 1988), p.171; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 324. .

[7] His name appears in many forms: Vurfandus, Uuruuant, Guorwant etc. I will use the form Gurwant as do most French historians of Brittany. He had been mentioned earlier in this annal concerning a slightly later period, for which see the following chapter.

> same place with only his own men, and remain there for three days after the king's departure. The distance between the Breton camp and the fleet of the Northmen was only eight miles. These words, which Wrhwant had spoken in jest, were reported to the leader of the pagans, Hasting, though I do not know by whom. Not much later Salomon made peace with the Northmen after giving them 500 cows.[1]

The story continues with hostages being exchanged and a long tale about Wrhwant/Gurwant actually staying behind and valiantly confronting Hasting's Northmen.[2]

In Vogel's opinion this stand-off happened in May while Salomon was at Avessac and he suggests the Northmen's fleet was eight miles away, probably on the little river Isac.[3] According to J.-C. Cassard: 'Le 25 Mai en effet le roi et son armée campaient sur la rive gauche de la Vilaine, face aux hordes d'un chef viking dénommé Hasting. Plutôt que se risquer à une bataille incertaine, Salomon préfère en fin de compte acheter le départ des envahisseurs contre le versement immédiat de cinq cents vaches qu'il s'engage à leur livrer.'[4] Now perhaps these views are pushing our belief in Regino a little too far,[5] and there is no explicit evidence that the Northmen had made an incursion up the Vilaine where they confronted Salomon's Bretons. The final 'peace' reported by Hincmar undoubtedly happened in the autumn. Not only is this the time in which Hincmar places it but we are also told that Salomon's 'Bretons harvested wine from his part of the county of Anjou', a thing that would not have been possible in the spring. In addition, the fact that Regino says that it was 'not much later' than wintertime that Salomon had made peace with the Northmen and given them 500 cows would, I think, still indicate a time in the spring. Finally, the fact that Hincmar talks about Salomon making peace with the Northmen in the autumn may suggest that the final peace was actually made somewhere along the Loire itself and not on the Vilaine, an idea supported by the statement that the Bretons had been able thereafter to harvest wine from Salomon's part of the county of Anjou.

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[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 108; trans. MacLean, pp. 171-72.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 231-32: 'Salomon von der Bretagne lag im Frühjahr an der Vilaine (bei Avessac) gegen die Normannen zu Felde; nur acht meilen von ihm entfernt (wahrscheinlich im Isac-Flusse) bestand sich die Normannische Flotte unter Hasting', 'Early in the year Salomon of Brittany took to the field against the Northmen and positioned himself on the Vilaine (near Avessac) only eight miles from the Northmen's fleet commanded by Hasting (probably in the valley of the Isac).'
[4] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 26-27, and *idem*, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 79.
[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 72-73, for example says 'Regino claimed that this tribute amounted to five hundred cows, but his inaccurate location of the campaign in winter ('hiemis tempore aliquando') and the fact that his report was probably based on oral tradition cast doubt on the historicity of the details in his account'.

Yet for one reason or another Salomon had not wanted to fight the Northmen and he had been content to pay them off[1] - likely initially in the spring with provisions and then later in the year with silver nearer to Angers.

Following the death of Robert 'the Strong' at Brissarthe in September 866, King Charles had appointed Hugh the Abbot as his replacement in Neustria,[2] but the first we hear of any action by him is in the autumn of 869. Archbishop Hincmar tells us that 'Abbot Hugh and Gauzfrid, with their men from beyond the Seine, fought with the Loire Northmen and slew about sixty of them'.[3]

During much of the year 869 Charles the Bald had busied himself with seeing to the fortification or refortification of various strategic places in Francia and Neustria.[4] First, having moved from Senlis to Saint-Denis on 16 February 869, where he also spent Easter, the king 'began the construction of fortifications, made of wood and stone, going all the way around the monastery'.[5] Also whilst at Saint-Denis in April Charles ordered the continuation of construction of fortified bridgeheads at Pîtres, actually located at Pont-de-l'Arche (dep. Eure).[6] In the autumn, following the assembly held at Pîtres, and it seems just after Salomon had made peace with the Loire Northmen and Hugh the Abbot and Count Gauzfrid had fought these same Northmen and killed sixty of them, 'Charles ordered that the *civitates* beyond the Seine, namely

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[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 79: 'Cette distinction honorifique [of Salomon in 868] ne règle pas pour autant le problème normand auquel Salomon s'attellera avec plus d'énergie encore en 869 : le 25 mai de cette année il campe « dans le pays de Nantes sur la paroisse d'Avessac où Salomon et tous les Bretons étaient prêts à combattre les Normands ». La bataille n'aura pas lieu puisqu'il préfère finalement acheter le retrait des intrus contre le versement de 500 vaches.' Based on the opinion of W. Davies (*Small Worlds*, p. 171), N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 34/352, says: 'By May [869], Hásteinn had assumed command of a group of Loire Vikings and attacked the Vilaine region. They were met in battle by 'Salomon and all the Bretons' (*CR* 242) and the *princeps* Guorhwant, who had halted in Avessac before proceeding towards Nantes; a peace treaty was concluded by exchanges of hostages, livestock and food, with the Bretons also gaining part of the Anjou wine harvest as part of the agreement since their access to it had been blocked by the Vikings (*AB* 869; *Regino* 869 [*sic*]).' This is an intriguing if not entirely convincing interpretation because nowhere is it ever said that the Bretons met the Northmen 'in battle' in the 'Vilaine region', much less at Nantes. The idea of Nantes seems to me to be another example of the oft-stated, but lurking, assumption that Nantes was the Northmen's base for many years. The idea that the agreement (supposedly in the spring) included a part whereby the Bretons were to be allowed to harvest wine in Anjou (no doubt in the autumn) which was necessary because the Bretons' access to Anjou 'had been blocked by the Vikings' has slightly more going for it. However, Hincmar's report of the 'peace' made between the Northmen and Salomon in 869 clearly happened in the autumn and was distinct from the earlier agreement to provide provisions in the spring as reported by Regino, and as discussed above.

[2] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 132; trans. Nelson, p. 136. Hugh the Abbot has not received much attention in modern French historiography thus the best surveys still remain K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', and É. Bourgeois, *Hugues l'abbé*.

[3] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, p. 166; trans. Nelson, p. 163. It is also said (*ibid.*) that they captured an apostate monk who 'had abandoned Christendom and gone over to live with the Northmen, and had been extremely dangerous to the Christians: they now had him beheaded'.

[4] Not to forget the building of defences at Angoulême - these started in May 868.

[5] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, pp. 152-53; trans. Nelson, p. 153; *Recueil des actes de Charles le Simple*, ed. P. Lauer, no. 10, pp. 15-17; L. Levillain, 'Etudes sur l'abbaye de Saint-Denis à l'époque mérovingienne', III, *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 87 (1926), pp. 84-85.

[6] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, pp. 152-53; trans. Nelson, pp. 153-54.

Le Mans and Tours, should be fortified by their inhabitants, so that they could provide defensive strongholds against the Northmen for the surrounding populations'.[1] It was possibly at this time that the walls of Orléans were starting to be rebuilt by Bishop Walter[2] to offer a shelter for the population following their destruction by the Northmen during earlier attacks, as described by Adrevald of Fleury.[3] In Coupland's opinion regarding Neustria and the Loire: 'Walter was first attested as Bishop of Orleans at the Synod of Ver in 869, and reconstruction cannot have taken place before 868, the date of the third Viking attack on the town. Given the proximity of Orleans to Tours and Le Mans and the continued presence of the Vikings on the Loire at this time, it seems certain that Walter's fortification work was part of a programme of regional defence. It would follow from this that Orleans, too, was fortified at the King's command in 869.'[4]

In response, 'when the Northmen heard of this [fortification of Tours and Le Mans], they demanded a great sum of silver and quantities of corn, wine and livestock from the local inhabitants, as the price of peace with them',[5] that is from the inhabitants of Maine, Anjou and Touraine. We simply do not know if these Scandinavian demands for silver 'tribute' and provisions were ever met. It could well be that they were because no attacks in the Loire region are recorded for 870,[6] although perhaps they had raided elsewhere in this year.[7]

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[1] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, pp. 166-67; trans. Nelson, pp. 163-64.

[2] Walter was certainly bishop of Orléans in 876; he still held the function in 885.

[3] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 36, p. 79; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 182-83: 'Donec venerabilis pontifex eiusdem urbis, cum summa dicendus reverentia, Galterius, Deo inspirante, muros, per cuncta fere destructos civitatis, sagacitate nobilis ingenii qua praepollere cognoscitur restaurans, defensioni coaptaret populorum.' For thorough discussions of all these defensive matters and others see amongst other works S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*; *idem*, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald'; F. Vercauteren, 'Comment s'est-on défendu, au IXe siècle, dans l'Empire franc contre les invasions normandes?', *Annales du XXXe congrès de la Fédération archéologique et historique de Belgique 1935* (Brussels, 1936), pp. 117-132. The walls Bishop Walter restored at Orléans were useful later to protect monastic communities, such as after late 885 for the clerics of the abbey of Croix-Saint-Ouen: see J. Le Maho, 'Une nouvelle source pour l'histoire du monastère de la Croix-Saint-Ouen à la fin du IXe siècle', *Tabularia*, '*Documents*', 5 (2005), pp. 1-15.

[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 181.

[5] *AB* 869: ed. Grat, pp. 166-67; trans. Nelson, p. 164.

[6] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 73, thinks they were: 'The belief that the inhabitants of Maine and Touraine paid the Vikings a tribute in 869 is supported by the fact that no attacks were recorded in the Loire region in 870', which he amends somewhat in his planned but as yet unpublished book by saying: 'Hincmar does not explicitly state whether such a tribute was paid, but the wording of his report suggests that it was, and this view is supported by the fact that no attacks were recorded in the Loire region in 870.'

[7] One possibility for this is that a raid took place in northern Brittany in this year, as described by Bili of Alet in his *Life of Saint Malo*. However, my initial conclusion in regard to this dossier is that if the incursion described by Bili really happened in 870, as is sometimes said, it had likely not originated from the Loire but perhaps from Ireland. In addition, even though P. Bauduin (*Le monde franc*, pp. 75-76) and others place this incursion 'vers 870', I tend to think it may have happened later, possibly in the 880s, but that is a whole other story for another time.

Hugh the Abbot's attempt to remove the Northmen

What we do know is that sometime in the summer of 871, probably in July or August, as Hincmar tells us: 'Abbot Hugh of St-Martin and Gauzfrid, with other men from beyond the Seine, launched an ill-considered attack on the island in the Loire where the Northmen had their base camp. Hugh and Gauzfrid suffered very heavy losses and barely managed to escape, leaving many dead.'[1]

We do not really know where this island base on the Loire was situated. It could have been the island opposite the monastery of Saint-Florent at Mont-Glonne - midway between Angers and Nantes - a place that Adrevald of Fleury had described as being their base in earlier years. But if as Isabelle Cartron has argued the community and the body of Saint Florent had remained in place until at least 881 then this location for the Northmen's base is perhaps unlikely.[2] Perhaps also telling against it is the fact that all of the area north of the Loire as far as the right bank of the Maine at Angers was by now part of Salomon's 'kingdom' of Brittany, and thus would the Neustrian magnates Abbot Hugh and Gauzfrid of Le Mans have ventured so far into Salomon's territory to attack the Northmen? On the other hand, that the island base attacked was *Betia* near Nantes must, I think, be excluded. I hope to discuss the situation of Nantes at this time more in the future, but there is really no way that Hugh the Abbot and Gauzfrid would have moved so far into 'new' Breton territory.[3] Given that Gauzfrid was based at Le Mans and Hugh likely at Angers, and given the direction of Scandinavian attacks in previous years it is possible that the island base was on one of the many islands in the Loire between Angers and Tours but we can never be sure.

In the summer of 871 when the Breton duke Salomon (we should probably now say king) announced his intention to visit Rome his magnates refused to agree to the trip, for fear of the Northmen (*propter timorem Normannorum*), and in Salomon's name the Redon monks wrote to Pope Hadrian II explaining why he could not come to Rome as he had desired: he had not wanted to leave because the pagans were still surrounding their country and he feared that if he left then they would immediately return.[4]

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[1] *AB* 871: ed. Grat, p. 181; trans. Nelson, p. 174.
[2] I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 52-53.
[3] Nantes had been in Breton hands since 851.
[4] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 247, pp. 198-99, dated 9 July. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 74, n. 159, says: 'The charter was drawn up on Monday 9 July in an unspecified year, but references to Salomon and Abbot Liosic indicate that the year in question lay between 871 and 874, and only in 871 did 9 July fall on a Monday.' For the letter to Pope Hadrian see *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 89, pp. 67-68. See also J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 27; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 319-20: 'en 871, Salomon avait désiré se rendre à Rome pour accomplir un vœu mais ses grands ne le permirent point par

Salomon had made 'peace' with the Loire-based Northmen two years before and most likely paid them a tribute. During these two years the Northmen had demonstrated no inclination to attack Brittany and thus while the Breton nobles' fear of their return may have been genuine the letter to Pope Hadrian could have been as Cassard suggests, 'une longue missive d'excuse'.[1] It is also sometimes said that an indication of the Northmen's continuing presence on the 'Lower Loire', and even at Nantes, is that Actard, the former bishop of Nantes who was made Archbishop of Tours in 871 with Pope Hadrian's support, and despite the protestations of Archbishop Hincmar, at this time was still 'in exile'.[2] I rather doubt this, although over the course of the next year, 872, the Loire Northmen did move to Angers where in 873 they were besieged by both Salomon and Charles the Bald, an occupation and siege which will now be discussed.

The move to Angers and an attack into Berry

Wherever the Loire Northmen's island base in 871 may have been, either downriver of Angers or, perhaps somewhat more likely in my opinion, further upriver somewhere between Angers and Tours, it seems that sometime in 872 they decided to move their base of operations to Angers itself, a move which would clearly have been regarded as a direct threat to both Abbot Hugh, who was among other things the count of Anjou, and more generally to the West Frankish realm, and also to Salomon's by now much extended 'kingdom' of Brittany.

Writing in 873 Hincmar said that Charles the Bald 'announced that the host would go in the direction of Brittany, so that the Northmen occupying Angers could not surmise that were going to attack that region, in which case they might have fled away to other places where they could not be so tightly hemmed in'.[3] We can approximately date Charles's move to Angers because Hincmar says that Charles the Bald 'while he was going towards Brittany, and actually on the

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crainte des Normands …', and pp. 340-41: 'Salomon expliquait qu'il avait fait vœu d'aller à Rome pour prier, mais que les Bretons s'étaient opposé à son départ parce que les païens - les Scandinaves - entouraient leur pays …'.

[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 27.

[2] See for instance S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 74. For more on Actard's situation during these years see *Hadriani II papae epistolae*, ed. E. Perels, *MGH*, *Epistolae Karolini aevi*, 4. 6 (Berlin, 1925), pp. 691-765, nos. 8 and 34-35 at pp. 707-9, 738-43; *Hincmari Epistolae*, no. 31, *Ad quemdam episcopum*, in *PL*, 126, cols 210-30, esp. 218; *Hincmari Opuscula et epistolae in causa Hincmari Laudunensis, Epistola ad Adrianum papam*, in *PL*, 126, cols 641-8, esp. 641; *AB* 867, 868, 871, trans. Nelson, pp. 140 and n. 11, 141, 142, 144, 145, 174. For a fuller discussion of Bishop Actard and the Northmen see P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings: Actard de Nantes', and A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 101-5.

[3] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 192; trans. Nelson, p. 183. S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 75, says: 'The King had falsely proclaimed the campaign against Angers to be an expedition into Brittany since he feared that the Vikings would desert the town if they learned of his intentions. In fact, the King's relations with Salomon were good at this time, and the Breton army completed the blockade around Angers by drawing up on the west bank of the Maine. The necessity for this deception implies that the Northmen must have been skilled in gathering intelligence, perhaps through spies, or more likely through sympathetic locals who were willing to pass on information.'

march' had received news that 'as a result of the scheming of his brother King Louis of Germany, the now-blind Carloman had been taken away from the monastery of Corbie by some of his former supporters [...] Charles was not greatly upset by this news, but proceeded on the campaign he had begun'.[1]

Additionally, when King Charles was engaged in besieging the Northmen established at Angers, Hincmar tells us that the 'Northman Rodulf, who had inflicted many evils on Charles's realm' had been killed in his brother Louis's realm, and that 'Charles got reliable news of this as he remained in his position near Angers'.[2] Rodulf's death in Frisia can be placed in June,[3] thus allowing some time for this news to reach Charles, who had been at Angers already for a little time, we might place his arrival there to about late June or maybe even July 873. But even before telling of the news of Rodulf's death reaching Angers Hincmar tells us about the Northmen's arrival there:

> The Northmen, after ravaging various towns, rasing fortresses to the ground, burning churches and monasteries and turning cultivated land into a desert, had for some time now been established in Angers.[4]

The expression 'for some time' (*iam diuturno tempore*) has usually, and probably rightly, been taken to mean that the Northmen had first arrived at Angers in 872. For example by Coupland, here following Vogel: 'The Loire fleet probably moved its base to Angers in 872, since the town was said to have been occupied "for a long time" by 873.'[5] If so, the fleet could not have arrived until some after 16 April 872 because a royal charter was issued at the cathedral of Saint-Maurice in Angers on that date and it makes no reference to any presence of Northmen in the area.[6]

Before looking at the siege of Angers itself, if the Northmen had moved their base of operations to the town in 872 what had they been doing in the many months, perhaps even up to one year, before Charles and Salomon arrived in the summer of 873?

As just noted, according to Hincmar before establishing themselves at Angers the Northmen had ravaged various towns, rased fortresses to the ground, burned churches and monasteries and

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[1] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 193; trans. Nelson, p. 183. For Charles's son Carloman's dreadful fate see J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 230-31; *eadem*, 'A tale of two princes', pp. 113-15. In addition, see *AB* 873: ed. Grat, pp. 189-90, 193; trans. Nelson, pp. 180-81, 183; Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: trans. MacLean, pp. 163-64 and notes; *AF* 873: trans. Reuter, p. 70.
[2] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 193; trans. Nelson, p. 184.
[3] See *AF* 873: ed. Kurze, p. 80; S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba', pp. 11-12, 32.
[4] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 193; trans. Nelson, p. 183. This formulation very much ressembles that of Bishop Haecfrid's letter in early 866 as discussed earlier.
[5] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 238; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 75.
[6] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 362, pp. 302-5.

turned cultivated land into desert. Even Regino of Prüm says, after mentioning Charles besieging Angers, that the Northmen had killed both Robert and Ranulf and also pillaged a few cities and territories.[1] Now all these devastations seem to be referring to all the raids and attacks in and around the Loire region since at least 866, and possibly even before this, rather than as some historians say immediately before 873. But after telling of the establishment of the Northmen at Angers, and before telling of the subsequent siege, Regino says that the Northmen 'launched surprise raids and devastated the surrounding regions' from their Angers base.[2]

It appears that there was a serious raid from the Loire into Aquitanian Berry, supposedly in 873. The *Annals of Massay* just say that the Northmen (*Marcomanni*) came to Massay (dep. Cher), somewhat west of Bourges: '873. Marcomanni in Masciaco venerunt.'[3] Although, as has been repeatedly mentioned earlier in this work, the *Annals of Massay* are often one year too late perhaps on this occasion because the event concerns the monastery where the annals were written the date may be correct.[4] If so it is most likely that the Northmen already established at Angers since 872 had undertaken this raid before the summer of 873, though for what reasons we do not know.[5] The annals do not say if the town of Massay and the monastery were attacked or burned,

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[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon* 873: ed. Kurze, pp. 105-6; trans. MacLean, p. 168.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Annales Masciacenses*, p. 169. These annals elsewhere (for example *s.a.* 865=864) use the word *Marcomanni* for Northmen, meaning in the annalist's opinion 'Men of the March', that is of the Danish March: Denmark.
[4] As discussed earlier in this chapter regarding the attack on nearby Bourges in Berry in 867.
[5] Perhaps the city of Tours was around this time free of Northmen, as the canons with the body of Saint Martin had certainly returned to Tours by August 871, as attested in a donation charter: see R. Poupardin, *Recueil des actes des rois de Provence* (Paris, 1920), no. XV, p. 29. See also H. Noizet, 'Les chanoines de Saint-Martin de Tours et les Vikings', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), pp. 53-66, at p. 58 and n. 17; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes', p. 57; É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', pièces justif., no. 1, p. 425; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 237. The August dating is due to L. Levillain, 'Essai sur le comte Eudes, fils de Harduin et Guérimbourg', *Le Moyen-Âge*, XLVI (1937), p. 155, n. 3. Of course, the canons of Tours may have fled again in 872 or 873. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 239 and n. 3, claims that before attacking Massay from Angers the Northmen had precipitated the removal of the relics from Saint-Martin at Tours to Burgundy, perhaps to Auxerre, before arriving at Chablis. But this is only based on the twelfth-century *Chronicon* of Pierre Béchin which itself borrows here and elsewhere from the notoriously inaccurate forged legend called the *Tractatus de reversione beati Martini a Burgundia.* Saint Martin's relics were certainly in Chablis in July 877 but they were back at Tours by December of the same year (see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 437, p. 477, and no. 438, p. 438; H. Noizet, *ibid.*, pp. 58-61; I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, p. 46; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes', pp. 57-60), but neither their date of arrival at Chablis nor the circumstances are known. It has long been suspected, following P. Gasnault (*ibid.*, p. 56): 'Il est encore une hypothèse qu'il faut envisager : les chanoines de Saint-Martin ne se sont peut-être pas enfuis de Tours à chacune des incursions normandes et ils ont pu, à plusieurs reprises, acheter leur sécurité à prix d'argent, comme le firent plusieurs villes ou monastères. Encore une fois, pour ces quelques années nous en sommes réduits aux hypothèses,' and to use Hélène Noizet's words (*ibid.*, p. 54) that 'il est possible [...] que les chanoines [of Tours] n'aient pas quitté la ville à chaque incursion, mais qu'ils aient monnayé leur sécurité avec les Vikings'. For a full modern treatment see D. Mazany, *Les reliques corporelles et de contact de Saint Martin de Tours : continuité et rupture dans la vénération et la transmission des reliques depuis l'époque médiévale jusqu'à nos jours*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Université de Tours, 2018). Furthermore, the reconstruction of the city's defensive walls ordered in 869 by Charles the Bald was well underway: 'Die Stadtmauer von Tours wurde vielleicht 871, spätestens in Jahre 877 vollendet', 'The town wall of Tours was perhaps completed in 871, but at the latest by the year 877': W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 230 and n. 5. Cf. also

although we can assume they may have been because the same annals report many other major attacks and devastations by Northmen in similar laconic terms.

If the push to Aquitanian Massay took place in the early months of 873 then had the Northmen made no raids the year before? No attacks are reported in our sources for 872. Perhaps this was because the Northmen had contented themselves with moving their operational base from their island to Angers and this had occupied them for most of 872?

Regino of Prüm, unusually getting his dating of 873 quite right here, says that 'Charles besieged the town of Angers', and after telling of Robert the Strong's and Count Ramnulf's defence of the frontier of their homeland, and that nobody could then resist the Northmen's violence,[1] then goes on to give what appears to be a rationalisation of the Northmen's intentions as well as their actions:

> The Northmen became excited by the pillaging of a few cities and territories and realised from the plunder available in each how much wealth they could get from all of them. They entered the city of Angers and found it empty because its inhabitants had scattered in flight. When they saw that it was impregnable because of its very strong fortifications and due to where it was sited, they were filled with joy and decided that it would provide a secure refuge for their people and their troops against those peoples who might be provoked in war. Immediately they brought their ships up the River Mayenne and moored at the walls, went inside with their wives and children as if they were going to live there, repaired the damage and rebuilt the ditches and palisades. From where they launched surprise raids and devastated the surrounding regions.[2]

Regino's story or rationalisation of the Northmen's intentions in taking Angers - that having pillaged some, no doubt Neustrian and Aquitanian, cities and territories they realised how much could be got from them all - is how Regino himself or his informants may have imagined matters, but he or they had no real insight into the Northmen's true motives and Regino's formulation here, as very often elsewhere, is taken from the Roman historian Justin's (Marcus Junianus Justinus's) *Epitoma historiarum Philippicarum Pompei Trogi*; here specifically Justin's

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H. Noizet, *La fabrique de la ville. Espaces et société à Tours (IX–XIII siècle)* (Paris, 2007). In any case the Northmen who attacked (?) the monastery at Massay would have been able to sail up the Loire and then join the river Cher a little west of Tours where it joins the Loire to take them to Massay; they would not, therefore, have had to pass Tours or even collect 200 pounds of silver.

[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon* 873: ed. Kurze, pp. 105-6; trans. MacLean, p. 168, leading to their deaths at and just after the battle at Brissarthe in September 866.

[2] *Ibid.*

description of Philip of Macedon's wishes for his troops in their attack on Byzantium.[1] More likely perhaps, the Northmen who had based themselves on an island on the Loire over the course of the preceding few years had come to feel that with all the fortification going on in the region (at Le Mans, Tours and Orléans for example), and having already experienced in 871 an attempt to remove them from their Loire island base, they would be better off occupying a more defensible site. But also, and maybe even more likely, they came to occupy Angers, from where the inhabitants had fled, because Angers was the comital residence of Neustria.[2] Robert the Strong, 'count of Anjou', had his Neustrian base there and since late 866 so probably had his successor Hugh the Abbot. Indeed, since the Northmen had made peace with the Bretons in the autumn of 869 somewhere near Angers it was Hugh who at about the same time had attacked them, though with limited success, and it was Hugh and Gauzfrid who in 871 had tried to oust them from their island base. Capturing Angers in 872 was therefore most probably with the intention of pushing back against their new and vigorous Frankish opponent. When King Charles came to besiege Angers in the summer of 873 it was probably at the request of Hugh and there can be little doubt that he took part in the siege.

In regard to Regino's remark that the Northmen had entered Angers with their wives and children 'as if they were going to live there' Vogel says:

> Er zeigt uns, daß die normannischen heere sich damals entgültig aus zusammengewürfelten Seeräuber-scharen zu wirklichen Auswandererheeren umgeformt hatten, daß sie sich von der Heimat vollständig losgelöst hatten (wenn sie natürlich auch fortdauernd Zuzug aus der Heimat erhielten), und daß somit alle Vorbedingungen zu wirklicher Ansiedelung im Auslande, zu förmlicher Koloniegründung gegeben waren.[3]

> It shows us that the Northmen's army had by now finally transformed itself from being a thrown-together group of Sea-robber bands into a true army of emigration that had fully separated itself from its homeland (although naturally they continually received influxes from their homeland), and that they had now had to hand all the prerequisites for true settlement, for a formal colony foundation.[4]

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[1] As shown by K. F. Werner, 'Zur Arbeitweise Reginos von Prüm', in H. E. Stier and F. Ernst (eds.), *Welt als Geschichte*, 19 (1959), pp. 96-116, at p. 104; reprinted in K. F. Werner (ed.), *Einheit der Geschichte. Studien zur Historiographie, Beihefte der Francia*, 45 (Sigmaringen, 1999), pp. 136-156, at p. 144. See also on this point P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 193 and n. 6, and F. Brunhölzl, *Histoire de la littérature latine du moyen âge*, vol. 1 : *De Cassiodore à la fin de la renaissance carolingienne*, vol. 2: *L'époque carolingienne* (Turnhout, 1991), p. 75.
[2] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 139; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 50-51 and n. 13.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 239.
[4] My translation.

Even if Regino's report is true this is all just supposition on Vogel's part. Such a view is sometimes expressed when we hear about the Northmen moving with their families, but when Northmen moved their operating base, which they did frequently, they very likely always did this even on the occasions where the extant annals do not mention it. These particular Northmen of 872-873, very possibly led by Alsting/Hasting, had been away from Scandinavia for some time; their wives or concubines were as likely as not acquired, consensually or perhaps often otherwise,[1] during their years in Gaul, and many of their younger children were likely the result of these unions. In an earlier chapter we saw how when Weland arrived on the Seine he was accompanied by his sons, who were already of fighting age. Weland's 'wife' had also come with him because when we next hear of Weland on the Loire, probably at Tours, in 862 he came to Charles 'with his wife and sons'. The point is that just because the Northmen who came to occupy Angers were according to Regino accompanied by their families cannot really be used as evidence for the idea that they were intent now on settlement or even founding a 'colony', rather than raiding, nor can the fact that they started to rebuild Angers's defences, which would simply have been to try to defend themselves better from any attempt to retake the city, which did actually happen in 873. Notwithstanding this, and whether with intent or not, this movement to Angers was, as Pierre Bauduin says, 'une évolution notable du mouvement viking'.[2]

A raid into Perche towards Évreux?

Before moving on to the siege of Angers itself, we should ask whether the Northmen now at Angers (or even before they had moved to Angers?) had also made some raids far to the north into Neustria during this year of 872.[3]

Coupland suggests this: 'Although no attacks were reported in contemporary annals *sub anno* 872, the flight of the community of St Lomer from Moutiers-au-Perche (Orne) in the spring indicates that the invaders must have been raiding north of the Loire, in the direction of Évreux. The monks headed west, towards Avranches, reaching their destination on 15 April.'[4] He adds

[1] Not to put too fine a point on it the Northmen often abducted local women and some of them they took as concubines or even, we might say, sex slaves.
[2] In personal communication.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 239-40, suggested that the presence of Northmen on the Loire in early 872 had probably led to the flight of Saint Philibert's community from Messais (dep. Vienne, between Angers and Poitiers) to their *cella* at Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule in the Auvergne, before they finally arrived at Tournus in 875. However, the whole idea of a stay at Saint-Pourçain before 875 is highly complex and often contested; for which see I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 133-45.
[4] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 75. In this he partly follows Vogel regarding a raid deep into Neustria. But W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 258, n. 1, argued that the relics of *sainte Opportuna* were removed from *Monasteriolum* (near Sées) because of a Scandinavian raid in 878 (which date may be doubted), and places the flight of the monks

that 'the identification of the brothers' precise destination, *Patricliacus*,[1] is uncertain'.[2] Coupland references here the *Translations of Saint Lômer* (*Historia translationis sancti Launomaris abbatis Curbionensis in opidum Blesas*).[3]

In 1646 Dom Noel Mars placed *Patricliacus* at Précey (dep. Manche, cant. Ducey);[4] in this he is followed by A. Boutin,[5] but other localities have been proposed, such as Parigny (dep. Manche, cant. Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët) or Percy (dep. Manche, cant. Percy); although the latter is in the Cotentin not in the Avranchin.[6] The latest idea is that of Daniel Lavalet who suggests Le Teilleul, dep. Manche, cant. Le Mortainais.[7]

The whole dossier of the translations of the relics of Saint Lômer is extremely complicated and in recent times has not been studied in depth, particularly with regard to the Northmen's supposed involvement or responsibility, with the partial exception of Lucien Musset in his short article 'Autour de saint Lhomer et de Corbion'.[8] Musset says elsewhere: 'Les restes percherons de saint Lhomer venus de Corbion, Moutiers-au-Perche (Orne, canton de Rémalard), s'abritèrent d'abord à *Patricliacus* (localité non identifiée de l'Avranchin) sous la protection du roi breton Salomon en 872, mais l'effondrement de la puissance bretonne les contraignit à repartir en sens inverse vers le *castrum* de Blois, qui sera leur aboutissement final.'[9] Earlier Musset had said that at an uncertain date, perhaps 872 or 878, Le Mans had served as a refuge for the relics of 'saint Lhomer' first evacuated from the Perche.[10] From my own initial and admittingly rather cursory reading of the two separate manuscripts of these late *Translations of Saint Lômer* it is not anywhere stated that the initial move to *Patricliacus* was precipitated by

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from Corbion in the same year, even though he recognises that the *Translation* gives the year as 872. He bases this conjecture purely on: 'the closeness of both places.'

[1] *In pago quoque Abrincadino villa Patricliacus*; see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. II, no. 84.

[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 75, n. 169.

[3] *Historia translationis sancti Launomaris abbatis Curbionensis in opidum Blesas*, ed. Mabillon, *AA*, *SS*, *OSB*, IV. 2, p. 246.

[4] Dom N. Mars, *Histoire du royal monastere de Sainct-Lomer de Blois* (Blois, 1869), p. 36, n.1.

[5] A. Boutin, *Le Trésor de Saint Calais* (Le Mans, 1954), p. 33.

[6] L. Musset, 'Autour de saint Lhomer et de Corbion', *Annuaire de l'Association normande*, CLII (1994), pp. 71-74, at p. 73 and n. 13. The monks seem to have made a stop at *Novus Mansus* (probably in Hiémois according to Musset) on the way to the Avranchin: *ibid*., p .73.

[7] Cf. D. Levalet, *Avranches et la cité des Abrincates, Ier siècle avant Jésus-Christ-VIIe siècle après Jésus-Christ : Recherches historiques et archéologiques* (Caen, 2010), pp. 186-87; *idem*, 'Des translations de reliques dans le diocèse d'Avranches aux IXe et Xe siècles. Nouvelles hypothèses', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du pays de Granville*, 90 (2013), pp. 169-89, at pp. 171-76.

[8] L. Musset, 'Autour de saint Lhomer et de Corbion', pp. 71-74.

[9] L. Musset, 'Les translations de reliques en Normandie (IXe-XIIe siècles)', in P. Bouet and F. Neveux (eds.), *Les Saints dans la Normandie médiévale*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (26-29 septembre 1996)* (Caen, 2000), pp. 97-108, at p. 104.

[10] L. Musset and H. Chanteux, 'Essai sur les invasions bretonnes et normandes dans le Maine', pp. 37-59, at p. 51. This information about a stay at Le Mans comes from the other manuscript of these translations called by Mabillon *Alia Historia Fusior*: *AA*, *SS*, *OSB*, IV. 2, pp. 247-48.

a genuine incursion of Northmen to or near to Moutiers-au-Perche, west of Chartres, or indeed towards Évreux, in 872 as Coupland maintains, although the presence of Northmen both along and north of the Loire in the immediately preceding years could certainly have made the monks insecure enough to briefly move their patron's relics to the Avranchin. In addition, in the second manuscript of the *Translations of Saint Lômer* no date for the move from Corbion is given, nor is it explicitly said that the move from Corbion to *Patricliacus* was caused either by an incursion of, or even a fear of, the Northmen, although the latter seems implicit.

On the other hand, the move from the Avranchin to Le Mans is rather interestingly said to have been caused by a fear of the Northmen. Finally, whether or not this flight of monks took place in 872, as Musset says: 'L'idée de fuir les Vikings en se réfugiant loin vers l'Ouest peut nous paraître singulière.'[1] Indeed so, if Northmen from the Loire (to the south) had ventured as far as the Perche towards Évreux why had the monks fled west and not north or east?[2] Overall, I would question the date of 872 for the monks' first move from Corbion as well as that it was caused by a real incursion deep into Neustria in this year, however given the paucity of sources this cannot be completely excluded.

Charles the Bald's siege of Angers in 873

Having told of Charles coming to Angers, and of what the Northmen had been doing before, Hincmar then starts his description of the siege itself:[3]

> Charles now besieged this *civitas* with the host he had got together, and surrounded it with a very strong enclosing earthwork, while Salomon, duke of the Bretons, stayed in position on the other side of the River Mayenne with his army of Bretons to be ready to help Charles. During the time that King Charles was engaged in this siege, Salomon sent to him his son, whose name was Wicon, together with the leading men of the Bretons,

[1] L. Musset, 'Autour de saint Lhomer et de Corbion', p. 73.

[2] L. Musset (*ibid.*, pp. 72-73) having pointed out that the Avranchin had been given by Charles the Bald to Salomon in 867, who had given it to *Gurhannus*, identified as the Count of Rennes *Gurvand* [as had La Borderie] the future assassin of Salomon, who gave it at least momentarily to the monks of 'Saint-Lhomer', suggests perhaps rather weakly that the 'singular' nature of the move so far west can maybe be explained because 'c'est précisément pour les protéger que le roi Charles avait remis Cotentin et Avranchin aux Bretons'. He references here the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* for 867. This is a rather peculiar interpretation of the 867 concession, and Hincmar does not actually say what Musset suggests.

[3] The siege and its outcome are described in *AB* 873: ed. Grat, pp. 192-96; trans. Nelson, pp. 183-85; Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon* 873: ed. Kurze, pp. 106-7; trans. MacLean, pp. 168-69; *AV* 874 [=873]: ed. von Simson, p. 40; and are mentioned obliquely in *Concilia antiqua Galliae tres in tomos ordine digesta*, ed. J. Sirmond, 3 vols (Paris, 1629), vol. 3, pp. 405-6. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 241, n. 2, for other later and very derivative sources for the siege.

> and Wicon commended himself to Charles and in the presence of his own faithful men swore him an oath of fidelity.[1]

Besides Salomon's son Wicon, the other 'leading men' of Brittany most likely included counts Pascweten and Gurwant who were involved in Salomon's brutal murder the next year. Hincmar continues a little later:

> Charles carried on manfully and energetically his siege of Angers. He cowed them so thoroughly that their chiefs came to him and commended themselves to him, swore exactly the solemn oaths he ordered and handed over as many, and as important hostages as he demanded.[2]

The conditions Charles imposed are then described, to which we will come shortly. On the other hand, Regino, after telling us that from Angers the Northmen had 'launched surprise raids and devastated the surrounding regions', which as suggested above probably means into Berry if not elsewhere as well, then tells his story of the siege:

> When Charles had been told that such a pernicious plague had implanted itself in the heart of the kingdom, he immediately gathered there an army from all the kingdoms under his control as if to put out a fire that threatened all,[3] and pitching his camp in a circle he laid siege to the city. And because the Mayenne flows past the walls of the city on the Breton side, he ordered Salomon king of the Bretons to summon his forces and come quickly, so that they could defeat their common enemy with a united force. Bringing with him many thousands of Bretons, Salomon pitched his tents on the bank of the Mayenne. The city was thus surrounded by besiegers from all parts. For many days it was beleaguered from all sides with the greatest effort, and new high-quality siege-machines were brought to bear. But the king's efforts did not produce a happy outcome, because the layout of the place did not permit easy access and the strong force of the pagans resisted with the greatest spirit, because they were fighting for their lives. The immense army was worn down by the long tedium of the siege, by hunger and by a grave pestilence. When the Bretons saw that the town was unconquerable, they tried to divert the river from its course so that, when its natural channel was dried out, they could attack the Northmen's ships. They therefore started to dig a trench of amazing depth and width. This filled the

[1] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 193; trans. Nelson, pp. 183-84.
[2] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 194; trans. Nelson, p. 184.
[3] This is another image from Justin.

> Northmen with such dread and fear that without delay they promised Charles a huge amount of money if he would raise the siege and allow them free passage out of his own kingdom. The king, overcome by base lust, took the money, withdrew from the siege and showed the enemy a clear road. Boarding their ships, the Northmen returned to the Loire and by no means left his kingdom as they had promised. Instead, they remained in that same place and committed acts that were far more evil and monstrous than before.[1]

One can see the descriptions of the siege of Angers given by Hincmar and Regino agree in broad terms, they both tell of the combined involvement of Salomon and Charles and of the Northmen's eventual expulsion. They do, however, differ on specific details, in particular on the greater role of Salomon and his purported attempted diversion of the river, which, according to Regino, made the Northmen despair and offer Charles money to let them leave.[2] Historians of Brittany such as Guillotel and Cassard have accepted Regino's version on these two points,[3] as at least partially did Vogel.[4] Werner argued that Regino may have visited Angers in about 890, which was when and where he got his information on these years, probably from Bishop

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[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, ed. Kurze, pp. 106-7; trans. MacLean, pp. 168-69. Based on La Borderie's views (cf. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 94), N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany,* p. 34/352, states: 'In 873 Hæsteinn's army was besieged at Angers by the Franks who had trapped the Scandinavians by diverting the course of the river there.' Perhaps it is worthy of note that interestingly Regino does not say that the Northmen who were besieged at Angers were led by 'Hasting'; that they were is just a lurking assumption, whether right or not, made by various historians. Having said this I do think that Hasting/Alsting had been active on the Loire and on the borders of Brittany ever since 866. It is, therefore, quite possible, even probable, that it was he and his fleet/army who came to occupy Angers in 872 and were besieged there the next year.

[2] S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings', p. 65, argues very strongly against any belief in the idea of the attempt to divert the river.

[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 320; J.-C. Cassard, *Les Bretons de Nominoë*, p. 81: 'Le roi Salomon aura encore l'occasion de faire montre de ses compétences de stratège lors du siège d'Angers en 873 : répondant loyalement aux appels pressants de Charles le Chauve, il accourt à son aide et lui apporte son concours pour rendre étanche la ceinture de sentinelles que le souverain franc avait établie autour de la cité d'Angers alors occupée par les Vikings. Salomon, établi dans la partie de la ville qui était placée sous sa souveraineté, découvre même le moyen de rendre à merci les assiégés en faisant détourner par ses Bretons le cours de la Maine : les barques noroises gisent bientôt au sec, inutiles. Les pirates ont dès lors perdu tout espoir de fuite. Ces efforts seront finalement rendus vains par la folle décision de Charles « mû par une honteuse cupidité (Réginon de Prüm) de laisser la voie libre aux assiégés contre le versement d'une grosse somme d'argent et la solennelle promesse de n'y plus revenir. Irréelle et dérisoire fin pour un siège épuisant ! Réginon conclut mélancoliquement son récit par ces mots désabusés : « Demeurés au même endroit, ils perpétrèrent des actes encore plus monstrueux qu'avant. »'; *idem*, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 28

[4] Cf. W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 241-44. Vogel seems to accept the Salomon's diversion of the Maine (p. 242, n. 1) based on the statement of A. de La Borderie (*Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 94, n. 5) that the traces of this 'canal' were still visible in his own day. Vogel adds (*ibid*., pp. 242-43) that 'allegedly at least' (*angeblich wenigstens*), meaning from Regino's report, this filled the Northmen with such dread that they sent negotiators to Charles who offered the king a great sum of money if he would let them leave unhindered, and that Charles had felt moved through shameful greed to accept this offer and accepted the money. But Vogel is rather equivocal regarding the idea that this is really how matters had gone down. He states (*ibid*., pp. 243-44, my translation): 'Whether Charles had really received money is in some ways doubtful as Hincmar is conspicuously silent on the subject'; but Vogel adds that such an acceptance of money 'would in itself have been quite understandable as the king would in any case have feared a desperate fight with the Northmen', and 'whether he [Charles] really took the money out of greed and against the wishes of his army I would like to leave to one side'.

Raino of Angers.[1] It is not my intention here to enter into the still ongoing debate concerning Hincmar versus Regino on the siege of Angers,[2] even though it does concern the Northmen. A nuanced modern assessment has been given by Pierre Bauduin[3] who concludes by saying that the available data 'ne permettent pas de trancher en faveur de Réginon, d'autant plus que d'autres éléments […], viennent au crédit de la version transmise par Hincmar'.[4] This is a view expressed earlier by Simon Coupland: 'It appears that Regino's version of events is an untrustworthy piece of Breton propaganda, to which Hincmar's account should be preferred,'[5] and by Janet Nelson: 'It is not clear that Regino's version of events should be preferred to Hincmar's.'[6] Maybe so, maybe not, but I will leave the issue here.

But what became of these Northmen? According to Hincmar 'the conditions imposed' by the valiant and victorious Charles on the Northmen were 'that on the day appointed they should leave Angers and never again as long as they lived either wreak devastation in Charles's realm or agree to others doing so. They requested to be allowed to stay until February on an island in

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[1] K. F. Werner, 'Zur Arbeitweise Reginos von Prüm', pp. 99-110, esp. pp. 106-7 and p. 110; *idem*, 'Les premiers Robertiens et les premiers Anjou', p. 45, nn. 24, 25, p. 48, n. 46; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 195. J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 184, n. 12, says: 'Werner [...] argues that Regino himself was at Angers in 873'; a statement repeated by S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 169, n. 201: 'Werner argued that Regino was an eyewitness to this siege'. This is not correct; Werner in fact argued for a possible visit in *c*.890. Both Nelson and MacLean (*ibid*.) appeal to W.-R. Schleidgen, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm, Abhandlungen zur mittelrheinischen Kirchengeschichte*, 31 (Mainz, 1977), pp. 14-16, regarding the (wrong) claim that Werner had maintained that Regino was at Angers in 873. In fact, Schleidgen in these pages does not say that Werner had said Regino was at Angers in 873, he was just arguing here that a tenth-century Angers text (for which see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 191-96 and notes) derived from Regino's report and not from any notes left by Regino in Angers in *c*.890 or at any other time (see also P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 194 and n. 4; S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 9). But Nelson also suggests that Hincmar was present at Angers in 873 (*ibid*., p. 185, n. 17): 'The content and structure of Hincmar's account make it likely that he was with Charles at the siege of Angers,' as, following her, does S. MacLean (*ibid*.) regarding Hincmar's report 'whose detail suggests eyewitness authority'. This seems a reasonable assumption given that Hincmar gives very detailed information regarding the move to Angers, the siege itself and its ending, and the route taken subsequently by Charles back to the north. On the other hand, P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 189, points out: 'On ne peut établir avec certitude qu'Hincmar fut présent au siège d'Angers: l'hypothèse, suggérée par Janet Nelson, se heurte à ce que Jean Devisse a pu reconstituer de l'itinéraire de l'archevêque.' This opinion is based on J. Devisse's view in *Hincmar, archevêque de Reims, 845-882*, vol. 2 (Geneva, 1976), p. 922, that, to use Bauduin's words (*ibid*., p. 189, n. 4), Devisse 'n'indique pas de déplacement [of Hincmar] pour l'année 873 et se demande si l'archevêque n'est pas resté à Reims toute l'année'. Perhaps supporting the idea that Hincmar was actually at Angers is the fact that Bishop Robert of Le Mans wrote to other bishops who were besieging Angers (*de loco obsidionis*): see *Concilia antiqua Galliae tres in tomos ordine digesta*, ed. J. Sirmond, 3 vols (Paris, 1629), vol. 3, pp. 405-6; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 240, n. 3.

[2] Much less on the question of Regino and his sources, for which compare in the first instance: K. F. Werner, 'Zur Arbeitweise Reginos von Prüm'; W.-R. Schleidgen, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm*; H. Löwe, 'Regino von Prüm und das historische Weltbild der Karolingerzeit', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter*, 17 (1952), pp. 151-79; E. Dümmler, *Die Chronik des Abtes Regino von Prüm* (Leipzig, 1939); and more recently S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, pp. 8-53; E. Wisplinghoff, 'Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Klosters Prüm an der Wende vom 9. zum 10. Jahrhundert', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 55 (1999), pp. 439-76.

[3] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 187-97.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 197.

[5] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 76.

[6] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 184, n. 12.

the Loire, and to hold a market there; and, in February, they agreed, those of them who had by then been baptised and wished thenceforth to hold truly to the Christian religion would come and submit to Charles, those still pagan but willing to become Christian would be baptised under conditions to be arranged by Charles, but the rest would depart from his realm, never more, as stated above, to return to it with evil intent'.[1]

This should be compared with Regino's statement, as already quoted above, that after King Charles had taken a tribute from the Northmen, 'overcome by base lust', they 'withdrew from the siege and showed the enemy a clear road. Boarding their ships, the Northmen returned to the Loire'. The only other contemporary report of the siege of Angers is found in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*. The annalist of Saint-Vaast 'like Regino, interprets this agreement in a negative light, though adds that Charles received hostages':[2]

> King Charles besieged the Northmen in the town of Angers, but following the advice of very bad men he accepted hostages and allowed them to depart unscathed.[3]

That Charles had taken hostages to try to guarantee that the Northmen did actually leave his kingdom, which we ought to remember only extended as far as the left bank of the Maine at Angers, was standard practice at this time. But that hostages had been given could equally have been a result of the scenario described by Hincmar or that proposed by Regino.

More intriguing is the mention of the 'island in the Loire' where the Northmen were to stay over the winter. Here Hincmar's statement that the Northmen 'requested to be allowed to stay until February on an island in the Loire' concords with Regino's 'the Northmen returned to the Loire'. Where could this island have been? It is rather unlikely to suggest, as Simon MacLean does, that this island was Noirmoutier,[4] which it seems is just based on the old idea that Noirmoutier had been the principal base of the Northmen since 843.[5] If Charles the Bald really had given permission for the Northmen to hold a market on their Loire island, and note that

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[1] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, pp. 194-95; trans. Nelson, p. 185.
[2] S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 169, n. 201. See also P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 189. The giving of hostages was also reported in the tenth century by Folcuin, *Gesta abbatum sancti Bertini Sithiensium*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 13 (Hanover, 1881), pp. 600-34, at p. 621.
[3] *AV* 874 [=873], ed. von Simson p. 40; trans. Coupland.
[4] S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 169, n. 201.
[5] Alternatively the whole idea that, as P. Bauduin (*Le monde franc*, p. 187) puts it, 'Au début des années 870, les Scandinaves sont solidement établis à l'embouchure de la Loire', and that 'ils s'installent de manière apparemment permanente dans le camp d'hivernage qu'ils avaient établi sur l'île de *Betia* et occupent Nantes', from where 'ils s'emparent d'Angers', is highly debateable to say the very least. It is based here essentially, and very explicitly, on the views of J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 27; *idem*, *Les Bretons de Nominoë,* p. 80: 'A Nantes un fort contingent Scandinave continuera […] à prospérer.' Of course, Cassard's opinion was not original; it had previously been expressed amongst others by H. Guillotel and W. Vogel. All of these ideas are ultimately based on a rather too literal belief in the 'dossier' of Bishop Actard of Nantes.

Noirmoutier is not even on the Loire, their island must have been upriver of Angers because the whole of the lower Loire downriver of this city was controlled by the Breton Salomon and not by Charles. Coupland suggests without qualification that this island was 'downriver' of Angers.[1] I tend to agree with this although Hincmar actually only said that they were to remain on 'quadam insula Ligeris fluuii'.[2] Perhaps the island was the one opposite the monastery of Saint-Florent at Mont-Glonne midway between Angers and Nantes that the Northmen had previously used as a base from which to make their raids? If so then Charles's supposed permission to hold a market there would have been completely irrelevant because he had no control of this area, although Salomon probably did. So perhaps Salomon and not Charles had really given the permission? Hincmar ends his story of the siege of Angers by saying:

> After all this, Charles together with the bishops and people, with the greatest demonstration of religious fervour, restored to their rightful places with rich offerings the bodies of SS Albinus and Licinius which had been disinterred from their graves for fear of the Northmen. So, when the Northmen had been thrown out of Angers and hostages had been received, Charles left there in October and travelling by way of the *civitas* of Le Mans and the town [*oppidum*] of Évreux, and passing close by the new fort at Pîtres he arrived at Amiens at the beginning of October.[3]

The Northmen do indeed seem to have cleared out from the immediate area of Angers by about the end of September 873,[4] because as Pierre Bauduin points out: 'Le retour des saints Aubin et Lézin, accompagnés de dons faits par le roi [...] trouve quelque écho dans la documentation diplomatique contemporaine. Dès février 874, le roi accorde deux diplômes en faveur de l'abbaye Saint-Jean-Baptiste et Saint-Lézin d'Angers, dont une donation, et il pourrait s'agir là des *munera* mentionnés par Hincmar,'[5] and there is no mention of any threat from the Northmen.

Bauduin suggests that these documents rather contradict Regino's testimony that 'les Normands restèrent dans la région de la Loire et redoublèrent leurs dévastations'.[6] But Regino actually said that the Northmen had returned to somewhere on the Loire after the siege (as in fact also does Hincmar), and thus that, using his words, they had 'remained in that same place' and

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[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 76.
[2] *AB* 873: ed. Grat p. 194.
[3] *AB* 873: ed. Grat, p. 195; trans. Nelson, p. 185.
[4] Hincmar tells us that after the return of the bodies of SS Albinus and Licinus to Angers, Charles left the city in October; he is attested as being in Le Mans on 12 October: see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 367, pp. 319-20.
[5] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 189 and n. 5. For the two *diplômes* see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 371, pp. 325-27; no. 372, pp. 327-29.
[6] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 189.

‘continued their depredations from there’ clearly means that they did this from somewhere on an island in the Loire and not from Angers. That this was actually the case is explored in the next chapter.

Summary comments

To summarise a little: the period between 864 and 873 was a highly complex one, not only for the Northmen but also for the Bretons and the Franks. It saw the comings and goings of distinct groups of Northmen operating along the Loire and raiding into neighbouring regions, including Brittany, Frankish Neustria and Aquitanian Berry. Some of these Northmen had even, once again, been hired by the Bretons. One group was led by a chieftain called Baret who possibly had Irish connections, and who may have even gone there in 866 or 867. Furthermore, in spite of the necessary caution of Ferdinand Lot, it is not out of the question that Alsting/Hasting was already leading a group of Northmen on the Loire from 866. If so, it is possible that he had been active on the Seine from 865 to 866 and was the leader of the Northmen at Angers in 873. We cannot be sure of this, but this thesis is all about exploring possible connections and that is what I have done here, acknowledging of course that some of these possible connections can never be proved.

Chapter 10

FROM ANGERS TO ALSTING'S WITHDRAWAL IN 882, AND A LITTLE THEREAFTER

Walther Vogel says that after the siege of Angers in 873 and the Northmen's withdrawal from the immediate area in early 874: 'Fast ein Jahrzehnt sollte noch vergehen, ehe die normannischen Schiffe auf einige Zeit wieder gänzlich aus der Loire verschwanden', 'Almost a decade would have to pass before the Northmen's ships disappeared for some time again completely from the Loire'.[1] This means until 882.

This chapter will explore this period, and even a little longer. In terms of the Northmen 'in Aquitaine' this is both necessary and pertinent because not only is the Loire the northern and eastern limit of Aquitaine but during this period there were also incursions south of the river into Aquitaine proper. These connections must also be explored.

Rivalries in Brittany after the death of Salomon and the Northmen's involvement

In J.-C. Cassard's opinion, 'L'année 874 représente un tournant décisif par la faute des Bretons eux-mêmes qui n'ont pas su conserver leur cohésion derrière un chef incontesté. Cette faille sert admirablement, et pour longtemps, les desseins des Vikings : le dernier quart du IXe siècle sera leur en majeure partie, avant que la concorde rétablie ne les chasse pour un temps'.[2]

After Salomon had returned to Brittany proper from his frontier at Angers in late 873 he was murdered just a few months later on 28 June 874.[3] His murderers included his son-in-law and steward (*intendant*) Pascweten, the count of Vannes,[4] and Gurwant, probably a count from northern Brittany centred on either the bishopric of Saint-Pol-de-Léon or that of Alet.[5] The third

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 244.
[2] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 33.
[3] *AB* 874: ed. Grat, p. 196; trans. Nelson, p. 186.
[4] For Pascweten see B. Yeurc'h, 'Le Vannetais du IXe au XIe siècle', *Bulletin et mémoires de la Société polymathique du Morbihan* (2016), pp. 1-22, at pp. 4-7; J. Quaghebeur, 'Puissance publique, puissances privées sur les côtes du Comté de Vannes (IXe -XIIe siècles)', in G. Le Bouëdec and F. Chappé (eds.), *Pouvoirs et Littoraux du XVe au XXe siècle*, *Actes du colloque international de Lorient, 24, 25, 26 septembre 1998* (Rennes, 2000), pp. 11-28, at p. 18; *eadem*, *La Cornouaille du IXe au XIIe siècle: Mémoire, pouvoirs, noblesse* (Rennes, 2002), pp. 59-61; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 355-57; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 121.
[5] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 357; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 121.

person involved in Salomon's murder was his nephew Wigo (Guigon in French), son of Riwallon/Rivelen who had been for some time a count of Cornouaille.[1]

But these two Breton magnates, Pascweten and Gurwant, soon started a veritable civil war for control of Brittany,[2] a contest that would continue even after their deaths under their successors Alan I 'the Great' and Judicaël until *c*.890. The beginning of this struggle is told of by Regino of Prüm:

> In the same year [874] Salomon king of the Bretons was treacherously killed by his generals [*duces*] Pacsweten[3] and Wrhwant [Gurwant]. After his death these two wanted to divide his realm between them but they disagreed on the shares because most of the people favoured Pacsweten's faction; and both sides began to wage war with the greatest force. Although Pacsweten had the greater following, he nevertheless engaged the help of the Northmen for money. He mingled them with his army to enhance its strength and then set out to wage war against his rival. Realising that the strength of the kingdom had fallen to Pacsweten, Wrhwant's followers began to drift away from him so that barely a thousand remained in the battle-line with him, and even these began to urge him to withdraw and avoid the danger of death - he could not hold back a countless multitude on his own with just a few men. To them he responded: 'God forbid, brave comrades,' he said, 'that I do today what I have never done before, namely turn my back on my enemies and bring infamy on our glorious names. It is better to die nobly than to rescue one's life dishonourably. Do not despair of victory. Let us test the forces of fortune with the enemy, for our salvation does not rest in numbers, but rather in God.' When he had roused his men's spirits with such exhortations, he charged against the enemy who numbered, so they say, over 30,000.[4] A shout was raised to the sky and battle was joined with the greatest courage. Wrhwant and his men penetrated the enemy's very tightly packed battle-formation and, just as the grass of the meadows falls before the cut of the scythe and abundant crops are knocked down by the raging tumult of a storm, so he cut down and scattered everything with his sword. Seldom was so much blood poured out in any battle

[1] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 354; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 121 and n. 19. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 61, says: 'Sans doute faut-il pressentir la Cornouaille du IXe siècle déchirée alternativement entre deux maisons rivales, celle de Nominoe et celle de Riwallon, comte de Poher.' For a still very good analysis of the probable reasons for Salomon's murder see A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 318-19.

[2] See J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 121: 'Pascweten and Wrhwant [Gurwant] fought each other for control of Brittany after Salomon's death: their conflict looks like that between the "ins" and "outs" at Salomon's court.'

[3] Almost all historians use the spelling Pascweten, as will I.

[4] This is clearly a gross exaggeration and Regino even seems to question the number by saying 'so they say'.

in that kingdom. Pacsweten, seeing his men butchered like animals, fled with the few who had not yet been extinguished by the sword. Then the Northmen whom he had summoned to help him entered the monastery of the saintly Bishop Melanius[1] and there, as they were accustomed to do, they barricaded themselves in until the following night when they scattered in flight and returned to their ships. This battle took place in a field near the city of Rennes.'[2]

If we accept Regino's basic story, even if not perhaps all of the details,[3] the context of this particular fight just outside the town of Rennes, where the underdog Gurwant took the day, is probably that the two Bretons were contesting the territories constituting 'New Brittany'.[4] This most likely took place in 875, although early in 876 is possible but in my opinion less likely.[5]

After telling of this battle near Rennes, Regino inserted a clearly retrospective story about Gurwant's previous exploits which, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, is probably referring to events in 869. But then he continues by telling of another battle some time later after Gurwant had become ill after his victory near Rennes:

His [Wrhwant's/Gurwant's] spirit was no less invincible in death than in war. For after accomplishing this victory [near Rennes] he was oppressed by illness and dragged into extreme danger. When Pacsweten had heard about his illness, he had regathered his forces and prepared to wage war against Whrwant's supporters. They were very frightened and

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[1] Situated at Brain-sur-Vilaine (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine).

[2] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 107-8; trans. MacLean, pp. 170-71. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, pp. 59-60, says: 'Pour les années 874-875 Réginon de Prüm, se fait l'écho des événements dramatiques qui agitaient la Bretagne,' and she then quotes *verbatim* Hubert Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 354-55) by saying: 'La même année, Salomon, roi des Bretons, est tué traîtreusement par ses généraux - *duces* - Pascweten et Uurwand [Gurwant]. Après sa mort, comme tous deux voulaient se partager le royaume, sans être d'accord sur les modalités, étant donné que le plus grand nombre était en faveur des partisans de Pascweten, une guerre à outrance éclate du chef des uns et des autres. Pascweten, bien qu'ayant les effectifs les plus considérables, loue néanmoins à prix d'argent le renfort des Normands, les incorpore à son armée pour augmenter ses moyens et sans retard attaquer son rival.' She then very closely paraphrases Guillotel again (cf. *ibid*. pp. 355-56) by saying: 'Uurvand, dans le même passage, est présenté comme ayant fait preuve d'une indomptable audace dans sa lutte contre les Normands au temps de Salomon [which refers to 869]. Peu après [which is not strictly true], Pascweten et Uuvand moururent tous deux, laissant la Bretagne en partage à Judicaël et à Alain le Grand ; ce dernier était frère de Pascweten.'

[3] Even S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 77, who one may reasonably say is an arch-sceptic regarding Regino, says we can 'accept the basic facts' of the story.

[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 358.

[5] The year 875 for the fight near Rennes was strongly argued for by A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 329-21. H. Guillotel argued for the early months of 876 (cf. A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 357), in which he is followed by H. Pettiau, 'A prosopography of Breton rulership, A.D. 818-952.', *Journal of Celtic Sudies*, 4 (2004), pp. 171-91, at p. 186; and, referencing Pettiau, S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 171, n. 208. J.-C. Cassard, 'En marge des incursions vikings', p. 266, says: 'La guerre civile qui oppose plusieurs compétiteurs [for Brittany] jusqu'en 890 permet aux Scandinaves de reprendre pied en Bretagne d'abord comme soldats stipendiés (dès 876) puis pour leur propre compte.'

> fled to their leader; they tearfully recounted to him Pacsweten's threats, asking his counsel against the imminent danger. And he urged them to proceed fearlessly against the enemy carrying his own banner, and promised them victory. When they replied that they did not dare to face their adversaries without him being there he regained his spirit, which had almost slipped away already along with the strength of his body, and because he could not travel on foot or by horse he ordered that he by carried on a bier and put in front of the enemy's battle-line, and in this way he would go into battle. When his followers carried this out, soon the enemy turned in flight. After achieving this victory, when they wanted to carry him back to his house, in the arms of his warriors he breathed out his spirit, which had only just been beating in his chest. A few days later Pacsweten himself died as well. After the successive deaths of these two, Judicaël a son of King Erispoë's daughter, and Alan, the foresaid Pacsweten's brother, divided Brittany between them. There were many disputes and wars between them as well. But when Judicaël was killed in a battle he was waging against the Northmen with more daring than foresight, all of Brittany went over to Alan's authority, and he governs it vigorously up to the present day.[1]

This second confrontation involving Pascweten and a very ill Gurwant, who nevertheless is said to have been the victor again, seems to me to have taken place some little time after the first at Rennes; it is placed by Hubert Guillotel in the first few months of 876,[2] with which I would agree. Gurwant had died immediately after this before he could even be carried home, and Pascweten himself died a few days later; the latter's brother and successor Alan I 'the Great' had already received the Vannetais by June 876.[3]

For our purposes what is of most interest is the involvement of the Northmen yet again. That Pascweten had hired the Northmen and mixed them with his own men in order to fight his rival Gurwant is in no way unusual. It will be remembered that Erispoë had allied with Sidroc's Northmen in 853 to try to dislodge previously established Northmen (Oskar's) from the island of *Betia* near Nantes; in early 862 Salomon himself had hired nine ship-loads of the Northmen who had recently returned from Iberia and the Mediterranean; Salomon had also allied with, or more likely hired, the now Loire-based Northmen to make attacks on Le Mans in 865 and 866,

[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 109-110; trans. MacLean, p. 173. In P. Bauduin's opinion (pers. comm.) there must have been a *récit autonome* of the exploits of Gurwant and of this civil war.
[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 357. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 324, places the death in 877.
[3] *Ibid.*

culminating in the battle at Brissarthe. It is quite conceivable, but in no way capable of proof, that Pascweten had known the Loire Northmen and their leader, who is usually said to have been 'Hasting', from these two Breton-Scandinavian raids to Le Mans or even from the siege of Angers in 873 itself. What is clear though, I think, is that the Northmen Pascweten had hired as mercenaries or auxiliaries were at least some of those who had been besieged at Angers and who had agreed with Charles the Bald and Salomon to vacate the area of Angers, but that they could stay on their Loire island base until February the next year, 874. There is simply nowhere else these Northmen could have come from.

Gurwant may have had his power base in the Alet/Dol area of northern Brittany.[1] When he came to meet Pascweten near Rennes in 875, or possibly early in 876, he had probably therefore come from the north.[2] Pascweten however had probably arrived with his mercenary Northmen from either Nantes on the Loire or Vannes on the Vilaine. After the battle when Pascweten had fled his Scandinavian mercenaries first headed south and holed up in the monastery of Saint Melaine which is situated at Brain-sur-Vilaine (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine) on the north bank of the Vilaine.[3] Thus when they left the monastery the following night and fled to their ships these ships can only have been somewhere on the Vilaine itself. But what did these Northmen do after that?

Baptisms and taxes to remove the Northmen, 876-877

From the presumed departure from the Loire of the Northmen who had been besieged at Angers in 873, or more precisely and much more certainly from the region immediately around Angers, during the rest of 874 and throughout 875 and 876 there are no reports of any raids along the Loire valley or into adjoining districts.[4] It has been suggested that this was because they were away in Brittany acting as hired mercenaries for Pascweten. In 876 the only thing we hear about Northmen on the Loire from Hincmar, written about while he was at the assembly and synod being held at Ponthion in July, is that:

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[1] *Ibid.*; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 121.

[2] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 319, states that Gurwant 'had the North', and 'il possédait le comté de Rennes comprenant, dès lors les territoires du diocèse d'Aleth et du Poutrocoêt ; il avait ou devait avoir sous sa suzeraineté l'Ouest de la Domnonée c'est-à-dire les comtes de Pentevr et de Goëlo, et au delà encore celui de Léon'. That he was the count of Rennes is disputed by more modern historians, but La Borderie points out (*ibid.*, n. 3): 'Réginon ne lui donne pas ce titre, mais son récit prouve que Rennes était sa capitale.'

[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 157-58.

[4] In January 876 Count Eccard of Mâcon bequeathed three estates in Burgundy to the abbey of Fleury to act as a refuge and to support the brothers if they were driven into exile: M. Prou and A. Vidier (eds.), *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de St Benoît-sur-Loire*, 2 vols (Paris, 1900-37), vol. 1, pp. 67-78.

> A group of Northmen were baptised by Hugh the abbot and *marchio*, and consequently were presented to the emperor. He bestowed gifts on them and sent them back to their own people, but afterwards, like typical Northmen, they lived according to the pagan custom just as before.[1]

Simon Coupland points out: 'It was presumably this incident or one like it which gave rise to Notker's story of the Viking who came back for baptism twenty times, year after year, because of the gifts which he received.'[2]

We cannot and must not infer too much from Hincmar's brief statement; first because it is not absolutely clear that Hugh had actually baptised this no doubt small group of Northmen in 876; they could have been baptised earlier, indeed at any time after February 874 when following the end of the siege of Angers and under the terms of the withdrawal agreement those of the Northmen who were still pagan 'but willing to become Christian would be baptised under conditions to be arranged by Charles'. Whatever the case may have been, that Hugh the Abbot had brought this probably small group of Northmen all the way to Ponthion in north-eastern Francia is astonishing. They must have been important Northmen not only because of the fact that Charles, only recently crowned as emperor, 'bestowed gifts on them', but also, reading if one may between the lines, because Hugh obviously brought them to Charles at Ponthion to try to demonstrate his success in keeping the Loire Northmen under control.

One possibility is that if these Northmen really had been baptised by Hugh just before July 876, perhaps somewhere near his base at Angers, they just could have been some chieftains of the Northmen who early in the year had suffered heavy losses near to Rennes at the hands of Gurwant and who had fled on their ships from the Vilaine. Most historians would suggest that it was the chieftain Hasting/Alsting who was in command of the Loire Northmen during this whole period. In addition, if this Hasting/Alsting is the same person who left the Loire in 882, as discussed more below, and who later reappeared on the Somme in 890 before going to England in 892 (called *Hæsten*) then another thought arises. Janet Nelson suggests that the evidence of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle s.a.* 892-893 'perhaps' implies that Hasting (or Alsting/Hæsten) had earlier 'adopted Christianity in Francia'; that is that he had been baptised.[3]

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[1] *AB* 876: ed. Grat, p. 206; trans. Nelson, p. 195.

[2] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 80. For which see Notker the Stammerer, *The Deeds of the Emperor Charle*s, in T. F. X. Noble (trans.), *Charles and Louis the Pious*, book 2, chap. 18, pp. 115-16; H. Haefele (ed.), *Taten Kaiser Karls des Grossen*, *MGH*, *SRG*, 12 (Berlin, 1962), pp. 89-90.

[3] J. L. Nelson, 'England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: II, The Vikings and Others', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13 (2003), pp. 1-28, at p. 24. Here (pp. 24-25) Nelson writes: 'As small essay in mining, excavate another London episode, this time in 893. It involved Hastein, alias the Northman Alsting documented on the Loire in 882, and thence induced by a Carolingian king [meaning here Louis III] to move to the Channel

This is quite possible but given our very meagre sources it can never be proved. Yet if so, it is not out of the question that Hasting/Alsting was one of the chieftains baptised by Hugh the Abbot and then been taken to meet Charles the Bald at Ponthion in July 876. Hincmar tells us that this group of Loire Northmen were then sent 'back to their own people', which one can assume means back to the Loire, where soon thereafter 'like typical Northmen, they lived according to the pagan custom just as before', which may suggest that although they had not necessarily formally apostacised they had just gone back to their former raiding ways.

All this is rather speculative, but whatever the case may have been there were certainly still some potentially dangerous Northmen on the Loire in 877.

According yet again to Hincmar, at the same time a very large tribute was being gathered in July 877 to get rid of the Scandinavian fleet which had arrived on the Seine the year before, which they eventually did:[1]

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coast and further raiding interspersed with wheeling and dealing ['*AV* 882, 890, 52, 68-69']. In autumn 892, Hastein was evidently among those Northmen who 'seeing the whole realm worn down by famine, left Francia and crossed the sea' ['*AV* 892, 72'] to England, where as '*Hæsten*' he appears in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 892 and 893, the only Viking leader named in its 892-6 section. Alfred swiftly came to terms with him, and Hastein's two sons were christened (had Hastein himself perhaps adopted Christianity in Francia?), with Alfred and Ealdorman Æthelred of the Mercians as respective godfathers; Hastein gave 'hostages and oaths'; Alfred 'made him generous gifts of money'. Hastein then 'made a fort' at Benfleet in Essex, and 'immediately went harrying in that very province which Æthelred, his son's godfather, was in charge of; leaving his wife and sons at Benfleet with 'a great army in occupation'. In Hastein's absence, a small contingent of West Saxons, augmented by Mercian troops from London, 'stormed the fortification at Benfleet, captured all that was in it, goods, women and children', and carried all them off to London, along with some ships. Hastein now met Alfred a second time in the same year, and this second encounter perhaps occurred in London. Alfred, mindful of their spiritual kinship [supposedly], 'restored his wife and his sons to [Hastein]. This was an act of royal *miltse* (mercifulness) indeed, acting out of a quality to which Alfred consistenty attached importance, a blend of personal humility and official power. In summer 896, 'the army dispersed, some to East Anglia, some to Northuumbria, and those that were moneyless (*fechleas*) got themselves ships and sailed south across the sea to the Seine ['*ASC* 896, 59']. Since Hastein does not reappear in any of the sources, we can imagine him ending his days moneyed and settled in England with his family, resident perhaps within the lordship of one or other of his *compatre*s, Alfred or Æthelred. His personal journey from raiding to settlement may have typified one kind of late ninth-century Viking trajectory.' This is, at least, one quite plausible scenario for Hasting's/Hastein's career and his ultimate fate although it is not at all the only one.

[1]*AV* 866-877: ed. von Simson, pp. 41-42; *AB* 876-877: ed. Grat, pp. 207, 211, 213-14; trans. Nelson, pp. 196, 199, 200. For the history of this incursion in 876-877 and the tribute raised to get them to leave see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 251-55; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 151-56; E. Joransen, *The Danegeld in France*, pp. 93-110. F. Lot, 'Les tributs aux Normands et l'Église de France au IXe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 85 (1924), pp. 58-78. I hope in the not-too-distant future to be able to analyse the origin and subsequent activities of the Scandinavian fleet on the Seine from 876 to 877. In essence it had probably arrived from Denmark and not from the Loire/Aquitaine, which is the only conceivable alternative, but I do believe it was most likely the fleet that then arrived at Fulham in England in 878 for which see in the first instance J. Baker and S. Brookes, 'Fulham 878-79: A New Consideration of Viking Manoeuvres'.

> Those bishops and others too who lived across the Seine in Neustria, took measures to raise a tribute everywhere they could to pay the Northmen on the Loire according to what they demanded.[1]

Another indication of the Northmen's presence on the Loire in 877 may be that the canons of Saint-Martin at Tours are attested as being in Chablis (dep. Yonne) in July 877 but they had returned to Tours by December of the same year.[2] It is not at all clear that the canons of Saint-Martin, with their patron's relics, had actually fled to Chablis in 877, as Simon Coupland for example claims,[3] but it is certainly possible. But their return to Tours by December 877 may imply that the bishops and laiety of Neustria had actually paid the Loire Northmen 'what they had demanded' - to use Hincmar's words.

878-879 and the second attack on Fleury

Whether or not the Neustrian bishops and lay magnates had paid a tribute to the Loire-based Northmen in 877, which may have kept Tours safe again, they were certainly still on the river the next year.

The emperor Charles the Bald died of a fever on 6 October 877 on his way back from Italy.[4] His son Louis, later called 'the Stammerer', was at Orville[5] when he got the news of his father's death, and he was crowned king of West Francia at Compiègne on 30 November.[6]

As has been noted above, during the previous year the Seine region had suffered a major Scandinavian incursion which was eventually bought off by the payment of a tribute of 5,000 lb of silver. The Northmen had probably only recently left the Seine when Charles died on 6 October 877.[7]

In May of the next year, 878, while staying at Saint-Denis the young Louis the Stammerer had been persuaded by Hugh the Abbot, the *markio* of Neustria, 'to go west of the Seine, firstly,

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[1] *AB* 877: ed. Grat, pp. 213-14; trans. Nelson, p. 200.
[2] *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 2, no. 437, p. 477 and no. 438, p. 438.
[3] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 81: 'At the same time [877], the inhabitants of Neustria had promised a separate tribute to the Vikings on the Loire. This seems to indicate an increase in Scandinavian activity in the region, which is also suggested by the flight of the canons of St Martin to Chablis, where their presence was recorded in July 877. The fact that the community returned to Tours in December of the same year implies that the tribute was paid.'
[4] *AB* 877: ed. Grat, pp. 216-17; trans. Nelson, p. 202.
[5] R. Poupardin, *Le royaume de Provence sous les Carolingiens (855-933)* (Paris, 1901), p. 81, n. 3, identifies this as Orville-sur-l'Authie, dep. Pas-de-Calais, arr. Arras, whereas R.-H. Bautier, 'Introduction' to *RAL*, p. xxiv, identifies it as Orville on the Oise near Quierzy
[6] *AB* 877: ed. Grat, pp. 218-19; trans. Nelson, p. 203.
[7] The *Annals of Saint-Vaast* for 877 report the departure of the Northmen before they report Charles's death (*AV* 877: ed. von Simson, p. 42)

to help Hugh against the Northmen, and secondly, because the sons of Gauzfrid had seized the stronghold and *honores* of the son of the late Count Odo, and because Imino, brother of the *Markio* Bernard, had seized Évreux and was causing widespread devastation in those parts, and even had the audacity to ravage the lands of Eiricus, behaving the way the Northmen do'.[1]

Leaving to one side the whole complex question of Odo, Gauzlin, Imino and his late brother Bernard, and of *Eiricus*,[2] Louis obviously did respond to Hugh the Abbot's call for him to help him against the Loire Northmen because he is attested as being at Tours between 31 May and 24 July 878.[3] According to Hubert Guillotel, in 878 Alan I of Brittany 'entre le 3 mai et le 12 juin [...] avait eu le temps de se rendre à Tours, de voir le roi et de s'en retourner en Bretagne',[4] and at this meeting at Tours 'in May' it had been necessary to officially sanction Alan's inheritance of *nova Britannia* after the death, without sons, of his brother Pascweten.[5] But in an uncanny parallel with what happened to his young son Louis III four years later (for which see below) whilst at Tours Louis the Stammerer had become ill, although he subsequently recovered somewhat.[6] This illness probably explains why he stayed at Tours for so long. But after his illness Louis soon went back north without, it seems, ever joining with Hugh the Abbot to fight the Loire Northmen.[7] He was to die on 10 April 879 only shortly before a new invasion of northern Francia in July by Northmen who came from England and who provided the initial core of the so-called 'Great Army' which was to plague northern France and elsewhere for the next nearly fourteen years.

Assuming that the bishops and magnates of Neustria had paid the Northmen a tribute the year before, Coupland suggests that in coming to Tours Louis 'may simply have intended to see

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[1] *AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 222; trans. Nelson, pp. 206-7. The lands of *Eiricus* likely means in the county of Dreux: see K. F. Werner, 'Untersuchungen zur Frühzeit des Französischen Fürstentums (9.-10. Jahrhundert)', *Die Welt als Geschichte*, 20 (1960), pp. 87-119, at p. 104 and n. 70; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of Saint-Bertin*, p. 207, n. 5.

[2] Hincmar (*AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 222; trans. Nelson, p. 207) tells us that after Louis had recovered a little at Tours 'Gauzfrid, through the influence of some of the royal counsellors who were friends of his [who probably included Abbot Hugh his former partner-in-arms against the Northmen], presented himself to Louis, bringing his sons with him. These were the terms they agreed on: Gauzfrid's sons should give up to King Louis the stronghold and *honores* they had wrongfully occupied, and then were to hold them thereafter by royal grant'.

[3] *RAL*, nos. 11-14, pp. 25-40. In charter no. 14, pp. 37-40, we are told that the buildings of the town of Tours must be rebuilt because they had been burned by the Northmen. It is likely that Hugh the Abbot had come to the king at Tours, maybe from Angers; Gauzfrid of Le Mans certainly came and Hugh was also the lay abbot of Saint-Martin at Tours where Louis seems to have mostly stayed while at Tours. See K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 84.

[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 360. Is this related or not to Hincmar's comment that while at Tours Gauzfrid of Le Mans 'brought a group of Bretons over to the king's allegiance. But they behaved in the end the way Bretons always do'? see *AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 222; trans. Nelson, p. 207.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 361.

[6] *AB* 878: ed. Grat, p. 223; trans. Nelson, p. 207.

[7] Louis probably left Tours in early August; he is next attested meeting with Pope John at Troyes on 1 September 'having not been able to get there sooner because of being ill', and he was crowned by the Pope on September 7: *AB* 878: ed. Grat, pp. 223-24, 227; trans. Nelson, pp. 207, 210.

that the fleet left the region, as he did on the Seine in 877';[1] this is possible, but even if so any hypothetical promise the Northmen may have made to leave the Loire (rather than just spare Tours) was not fulfilled because with Louis's departure from Tours in about late July 878 the next we hear of Northmen operating along the Loire is in Adelerius's narration of their second arrival at Saint Benedict's monastery at Fleury, upriver of both Tours and Orléans, which, as will be suggested below, can most probably be dated to the autumn of 879. Before addressing this assault perhaps a few words are in order regarding other raids which it has been suggested originated from the Loire in 878.

As was noted in the previous chapter regarding the year 872, Walther Vogel was of the opinion that it was clearly because the Northmen based on the Loire had once again begun raiding in 878 that Hugh the Abbot had requested King Louis's aid.[2] He then links this idea with the comment:

> Es liegen Anzeichen vor, daß sie [the Northmen] weit nördlich bis zur Perche und in die Gegend von Séez vordrangen, denn damals vermutlich wurde der hl. Launomar [Lomer] aus dem Kloster Curbio (Moutiers-au-Perche, Dep. Orne, an der Straße von La Loupe nach Longny) nach der Grafschaft Avranches, von da nach Le Mans und schließlich nach Blois, sowie die hl. Opportuna von Monasteriolum (jetzt verschwunden) bei Almenêches[3] zwischen Séez und Argentan nach Moussy-le-Neuf (Dep. Seine-et-Marne, östlich der Straße Paris-Senlis) übergeführt.[4]

> There are indications that the Northmen penetrated far to the north to Perche and into the region of Sées, because supposedly at this time the saintly Lomer was transferred from the cloister of Corbion (Moutiers-au-Perche, Dep. Orne, on the road from La Loupe to Longny) to the county of Avranches, from there to Le Mans and finally to Blois; as was the saintly Opportuna who was transferred from *Monasteriolum* (now disappeared) near Almenêches between Sées and Argentan to Moussy-le-Neuf (Dep. Seine-et-Marne, east of the Paris-Senlis road).[5]

He then describes the sources for these translations, Adalhelm of Sées's *Miracles of Sainte Opportuna* and the *Translations of Saint Lômer*, and suggests on the basis of some rather

[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 82.
[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 257.
[3] Almenêches is in the department of Orne.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 258.
[5] My translation.

dubious deductions that the relics of Sainte Opportuna were moved in 878, and although he acknowledges that the year 872 is mentioned in the *Translations of Saint Lômer* he shifted this translation to 878 purely 'because of the closeness' of Corbion and *Monasteriolum*.[1]

All in all, I think we should be very sceptical with regard to any raid from the Loire north towards Sées and the Perche in 878.

Let us now examine the second assault on the monastery at Fleury as told by Adelerius who was writing, I believe, in about 880 or not so long thereafter.[2] Adelerius added two chapters to Adrevald's 'first book' of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* which cover, in terms of new information, just the period 878 to 879.

In chapter 41[3] Adelerius first recaps a little of the reign of Charles the Bald and his brothers back to the battle of Fontenoy in June 841, before telling us that his son Louis [the Stammerer] succeeded him but that he only ruled for two years. He then tells us that the Northmen had first been attacking a part of Neustria and were only opposed by Hugh 'the most noble abbot', and that then the Northmen eventually came to Orléans but pressed on to the monastery of Fleury. But the monks of Fleury had been alerted to the imminent arrival of the Northmen and had left their monastery, taking with them all the treasures/valuables they could carry, loaded onto wagons. They headed for their property at La Cour-Marigny (dep. Loiret, cant. Lorris), located not too many miles distant to the northeast. Thus, when the Northmen arrived at Fleury they found, no doubt to their annoyance, the monastery empty, so they immediately pursued the monks by following the ruts or tracks they saw in the soil left by the community's heavily-loaded wagons.[4] It is then we hear from Adelerius of the intervention of Hugh the Abbot who, Adelerius says, was returning from Burgundy with a small troop of men. I will use Anselm Davril's excellent translation:

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 258, n. 1.

[2] For Adelerius see A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire et les miracles de saint Benoît* (Paris, 1965), pp. 162-64. However, Vidier makes one or two possibly inadvertent errors regarding Adelerius's story. Most striking is that whilst knowing that the attack on Fleury and the subsequent fight took place in the times of Louis III and Carloman (p. 163), he then goes on to say that after Fleury was burned (p. 164): 'Robert le Fort, aidé de Girbold, comte d'Auxerre et avoué de l'abbaye, fut vainqueur des envahisseurs près de Angers'. I have no idea where 'près de Angers' comes from, but clearly Vidier had not connected this fight with the report of Hincmar of the confrontation on the Vienne on 30 November 879. After Vidier's death the monks of Fleury corrected this (p. 164, n. 84), saying, correctly, that it was Hugh the Abbot who was involved and not Robert the Strong. But these same monks then follow de Certain's erroneous opinion (in *Les miracles de saint Benoit*, p. 88, n. 2) by suggesting that this combat must refer to the mention in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* that 'Abbot Hugh and Gauzfrid with their men from beyond the Seine, fought with the Loire Northmen and slew about sixty of them'. But this took place in 869 not in the time of Louis III or Carloman, nor even in the time of their father Louis the Stammerer! That Adelerius wrote not long after 880 is an assumption, it may have been later: see A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, p. 163, n. 83.

[3] Using de Certain's numbering.

[4] Adelerius, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*: ed. de Certain, chap. 41, pp. 86-89; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 190-95; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 347-48.

Il [Hugh] arrivait près du monastère et apprit par les siens [his own men?] que les frères étaient poursuivis par les ennemis et seraient très bientôt pillés s'ils n'étaient pas délivrés par une intervention merveilleuse de Dieu. Ayant donc appris cela, il pesa le pour et le contre, car il n'avait avec lui qu'un tout petit nombre de soldats et il était inquiet et soucieux, se demandant comment il pourrait s'opposer à une telle multitude. Pourtant, sur les encouragements de Girbold, le très noble comte d'Auxerre,[1] qui affirmait qu'aucun mal ne pourrait arriver à qui interviendrait contre l'armée des ennemis pour venir au secours de saint Benoît, il prit la décision d'engager le combat. Leur courage affermi par cette exhortation, et confiants en l'aide de cet excellent père, ils poursuivirent les ennemis sur leurs arrières, non loin du monastère. Un violent combat s'engagea avec grande ardeur, et ils firent furieusement un si grand carnage des ennemis que, sur une si grande multitude, c'est à peine s'il en resta un pour raconter à la postérité l'issue de la bataille. Après avoir obtenu cette victoire si désirée, le chef de guerre interrogea les siens, leur demandant si quelqu'un avait vu de ses yeux un moine d'aspect vénérable lui ouvrant le chemin au milieu de la multitude des ennemis. Ils lui répondirent n'avoir vu aucun moine dans ce combat. Lui alors leur dit : « Pendant tout ce combat, saint Benoît m'a protégé, tenant de sa main gauche les rênes de mon cheval, il me dirigeait et me protégeait, tandis que de sa main droite il tenait un bâton avec lequel il mit à mort beaucoup d'ennemis en les assommant ». Ainsi, grâce à l'intervention de notre père saint Benoît, les méchants reçurent leur châtiment et les innocents retrouvèrent la tranquillité, par la force du béni Fils de Dieu dont le nom demeure béni dans les siècles des siècles.[2]

It was probably an exaggeration on Adelerius's part to say that this battle victory was so great that hardly any Northmen were left to tell posterity of it, and it is a hagiographical trope to say that because of the intervention of the Saint, here Saint Benedict, 'les méchants reçurent leur châtiment et les innocents retrouvèrent la tranquillité'.

This victory of Hugh the Abbot and Count Girbald of Auxerre with their small troop happened according to Adelerius when Hugh (with Girbald too we may presume) was returning

[1] Count Girbald of Auxerre participated in the siege of Paris in 886 and is mentioned in a charter of his mother-in-law in 902. For how this story of Adelerius was taken up and distorted in later historiography leading ultimately to the erroneous idea that Rollo came to Fleury, see in the first instance A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, pp. 170-80, and W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 348, n. 1.

[2] Adelerius, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 41, pp. 88-89; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 192-95; A. Davril, 'Un monastère et son patron. Saint Benoît, patron et protecteur de l'abbaye de Fleury', *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 8 (2001), *La protection spirituelle au Moyen Âge*, pp. 43-55, available online at http://journals.openedition.org/crm/382, at pp. 7-8.

to his own country from Burgundy. We do not know all Hugh's movements around this time and Hincmar's telling of the whole of Louis the Stammerer's two-year reign seems to have been written up in one go after Louis's death on 10 April 879.[1] However, at least according to Hincmar, at the beginning of 879 Louis the Stammerer had wanted to go to Autun in Burgundy, but becoming ill he could not continue past Troyes. So, he sent his young son Louis (III) on ahead and 'with his son he sent to Autun Abbot Hugh [...]'.[2] It could be that Hugh had left Autun before Louis's death on 10 April, but much more likely he left for his own Neustrian marquisate after he had heard of the king's death. Hincmar actually says that after the news of Louis's death became known 'the men with the king's son', which means Hugh, Boso and Theoderic, 'when they heard of the child's father's death, told the magnates in those parts [that is in Burgundy] to assemble at Meaux to meet them and there discuss what should be done next'.[3] The whole struggle for the succession to the kingdom of West Francia following Louis the Stammerer's death trundled on in the coming months with two factions being formed, one with Hugh the Abbot very much taking the lead supporting Louis's young sons Louis III and Carloman, the other under Gauzlin of Saint-Denis supported Louis the Younger the son of Louis the German.[4] Janet Nelson summarises the complex political situation at this time:

> The dying king had confided his older son, Louis III, as sole successor to the guardianship of Bernard of the Auvergne, who was allied, in a kind of regency council with Abbot Hugh and Boso. A rival faction led by Gauzlin of St-Denis summoned the intervention of Louis the German's son and namesake [...]. The factions in the west reached agreement with each other by dividing the kingdom between Louis the Stammerer's sons, so that each faction had 'its' king; together they reached agreement with Louis the Younger by conceding to him Charles the Bald's Lotharingian gains of 870. Already in 879, "news of this discord" had drawn Vikings back from England to France to over-winter at Ghent.'[5]

[1] See J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 216, n. 6; M. Meyer-Gebel, 'Zur annalistischen Arbeitweise Hinkmars von Reims', *Francia*, 15 (1987), pp. 75-108, at p. 102.
[2] *AB* 879: ed. Grat, p. 234; trans. Nelson, pp. 215-16.
[3] *AB* 879: ed. Grat, p. 234; trans. Nelson, p. 216.
[4] For all this see *AB* 879: ed. Grat, pp. 234-40; trans. Nelson, pp. 215-19.
[5] J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 255-56.

But then in September Hincmar of Reims says:

> When Abbot Hugh and the other magnates who had aligned themselves with Louis [III] and Carloman [II], the sons of their late lord Louis [the Stammerer], heard that Louis [the Younger] was coming westwards into that region with his wife, they despatched certain bishops, Ansegis [of Sens] and others, to the monastery of Ferrières and there they had the young Louis and Carloman consecrated and crowned kings.[1]

The coronation of the sixteen-year-old, or possibly only fourteen-year-old, Louis III and his perhaps twelve-year-old younger brother Carloman at the monastery at Ferrières-en-Gâtinais happened in September 879,[2] and it is likely, in my opinion at least, that Hugh the Abbot attended it as well.[3] The *Annals of Saint-Vaast* inform us that in the time after the arrival of the Northmen from England in mid-July 879 they 'roamed about the whole Menapian region, ravaging with fire and the sword' and had 'entered the river Scheldt and wiped out the whole area of Brabant with fire and the sword'.[4] They then say: 'While this was going on, Abbot Hugh sent Bishop Walter of Orléans to entreat King Louis [the Younger] to take over the part of Lothar's kingdom which his father had granted to Charles when they divided the realm between them, and to go back to his own kingdom, leaving his cousins in peace. On hearing this, Louis accepted this share of the kingdom and went off to his own land. And Hugh had Louis [III] and Carloman consecrated kings by the hands of Archbishop Ansegis';[5] which might also possibly suggest that Hugh was present at the consecration at Ferrières in September.[6]

The relevance of this for our present purpose is to try to establish with a little certainty the date of the second attack on the monastery at Fleury. It is certainly true as Auguste Molinier said that Adelerius's extra chapters which he added to Adrevald's first book of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* covered the years 878 to 879;[7] or as Alexandre Vidier says: 'Dans le deux

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[1] *AB* 879: ed. Grat, pp. 238-39; trans. Nelson, p. 218.
[2] For the date of September see K. F. Werner, 'Gauzlin von Saint-Denis und die westfränkische Reichsteilung von Amiens (März 880), Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte von Odos Königtum', *Deutsches Archiv*, 35 (1979), pp. 395-462, at p. 428, n. 107; K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', pp. 95-96.
[3] An opinion seemingly shared by W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 268.
[4] *AV* 879: ed. von Simson, pp. 44-45; trans. Coupland.
[5] *AV* 879: ed. von Simson, p. 45; trans. Coupland.
[6] Only the thirteenth-century *Chronicle* of Alberic of Trois-Fontaines says explicitly that Hugh and some bishops had crowned Louis and his wife (otherwise unknown) at Ferrières, according to a Yonne letter (I imagine from Sens). See *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium*, ed. P. Scheffer-Boichorst, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 23 (Hanover, 1874), pp. 631-950, at p. 743: 'Qui Ludovicus apud abbatiam de Ferrariis Senonensis dyosesis nullo presente metropolitano per quosdam episcopos et abbatem Hugonem coronatus et cum uxore, sicut habetur in epistola Yvonis.'
[7] A. Molinier, '832. Adrevaldus, moine de Fleury', in *Les Sources de l'histoire de France - Des origines aux guerres d'Italie (1494). I. Époque primitive, mérovingiens et carolingiens* (Paris, 1901), pp. 255-56, at p. 255.

chapitres [of Adelerius], il raconte des événéments survenus sous Charles le Chauve et ses petits-fils, Louis III et Carloman.'[1] Given all the foregoing, I think we may suggest that Hugh had returned from Burgundy to Fleury near Orléans, and possibly even after his involvement in Louis's and Carloman's coronation at the monastery of Ferrières in September.

Overall, while nothing can be completely sure, I tend to agree with Walther Vogel's contention that the 'victory' of Hugh the Abbot and Girbald of Auxerre over the Northmen who had just come to Fleury took place later in 879, and was in all probability merely a *Vorspiel* to the bigger clash that followed in November of the same year, as discussed immediately below.[2]

According to Archbishop Hincmar, and clearly after Louis III and his brother Carloman had been crowned at Ferrières in September, the two newly-crowned young kings had gone in October to meet Charles the Fat at Orbe, in the Vaudois in present-day Switzerland,[3] and after they had 'returned from their journey':

> News reached them that the Northmen on the Loire were ravaging those parts, travelling about overland. Louis and Carloman marched immediately into that area and met up with them on St Andrew's day [30 November]. They slew many of them and drowned many too in the River Vienne, and by God's will the army of the Franks came home safe and victorious.[4]

We do not know if Hugh had gone with Louis and Carloman to Orbe but it is quite possible given the kings' young age and Hugh's effective or *de facto* guardianship. Von Kalckstein maintained that Hugh played the biggest part in the victory on the Vienne in November of 879, which was, of course, in Hugh's own 'realm'.[5] I deem this most likely.

The locality for this quite significant victory of the Franks over the Northmen is most interesting.[6] The river Vienne is a tributary of the Loire, joining it just east of Saumur and well

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[1] A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, p. 163.

[2] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 348. Vogel (*ibid*., n. 1) was concerned that, as he says, Adelerius placed the fight in reign of Louis the Stammerer, who died on 10 April 879. But this is not really too much of a concern because Adelerius does not actually say this, it is just a general assumption made, amongst others, by K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 91, and A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, p. 174. But the first raids in Neustria could have started before Louis the Stammerer's death, cf. Aimoin of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 200-1.

[3] *AB* 879: ed. Grat, p. 240; trans. Nelson, p. 219. For this meeting and its context see S. MacLean, 'The Carolingian response to the revolt of Boso, 879–887', *Early Medieval Europe*, 10 (2001), pp. 21-48; J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 219, n. 20; K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', pp. 96-98; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 266, 348.

[4] *AB* 879: ed. Grat, p. 240; trans. Nelson, p. 219.

[5] K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 98.

[6] All modern historians identify Hincmar's *Vincenna fluvio* with the river Vienne, a tributary of the Loire. Long ago Dom Bouquet identified it as the little river *Vigene* (now called the Vingeanne), which empties into the river Saône near present-day Pontailler-sur-Saône in the Côte-d'Or; but even as early as 1836 Paulin Paris recognised

west of Tours at Candes-Saint-Martin (dep. Indre-et-Loire). Candes itself seems to have been where Saint Martin himself was first buried. Thus, whether the Northmen had ever really got very close to Tours in 877, which I rather doubt, they were clearly somewhere on the Vienne at the end of 879, very likely after having quickly returned downriver after arriving at Fleury and suffering a setback at the hands of Hugh the Abbot and Count Girbald, and passing by Tours but not touching it. Perhaps they were near its confluence with the Loire, but it is also possible they were further upstream. Had, in fact, the Northmen been somewhere in the area of the church of Saint-Germain-sur-Vienne (dep. Indre-et-Loire), a property that belonged to the archbishopric of Tours,[1] or even on the island in the river just opposite it, when they were defeated by Louis III and his brother Carloman, and probably really by Hugh as well?[2]

To return to the second incursion to the monastery at Fleury, it is of great interest to note that it is also reported in England in the *Historia regum Anglorum*, in close chronological connection with the activities of the Northmen in France in the years 879-881, and in these terms:

> His diebus plurima in eadem gente monasteria concussa sunt ac desolata. Nam et fratres coenobii sanctissimi Benedicti, ipsius reliquias a tumulo quo locata fuerant immensa pulchritudine secum auferentes, hac illac discurrebant.[3]

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the absurdity of this location: see P. Paris, *Le premier volume des grandes chroniques de France selon que elles sont conservées en l'église Saint-Denis en France* (Paris, 1836), col. 79, n. 3.

[1] Whose archbishop at this time was Herard's successor Adalard.

[2] É. Mabille ('Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', pp. 180-81) summarises his opinion in the following terms: 'En 877, la flotte d'Hasting [note] remonta la Loire et les pirates exigèrent des Angevins et des Tourangeaux une forte contribution qui fut soldée par les évêques, à la condition qu'ils ne ravageraient pas de nouveau le pays. Malgré les termes de ce traité, en 879, les Normands, qui campaient dans une île de la Loire, à une faible distance de Saumur, après avoir laissé leurs barques sous bonne garde, se dirigèrent par terre vers la vallée de la Vienne, vallée riche et bien cultivée où probablement ils n'avaient pas encore pénétré; il est vraisemblable que ce fut dans cette expédition qu'ils s'emparèrent du monastère de Saint-Pierre de Parce, fondé en Touraine par Charles-le-Chauve, et qui fut si complètement ruiné qu'il ne put jamais renaître de ses cendres. A la nouvelle de cette invasion, Louis et Carloman se décidèrent à marcher contre les pirates, ils suivirent l'ancienne voie romaine et traversèrent la Vienne au port de Piles, ils ne tardèrent pas à rencontrer la bande des pillards, en tuèrent un grand nombre et forcèrent le reste à se noyer dans la Vienne.' Putting aside the question of Hasting, who I do think was the or a commander of the Northmen on the Loire by this time, Mabille assumes that the Northmen had their camp on an island 'à une faible distance de Saumur'; this may well have been the case but it is not sure or anywhere said. Also why had they had to leave their ships there and penetrated in the valley of the Vienne on foot? The idea that Louis and Carloman had crossed the Vienne at Port-de-Piles (dep. Vienne) is just conjecture, and W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 348, n. 1, argued, though rather unconvincingly, against it. Finally, I have no idea what Mabille is talking about concerning a 'monastère de Saint-Pierre de Parce' founded in the Touraine by Charles the Bald (an idea followed by K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 98). Here Mabille references the *Chronicle of Saint-Maixent* but I can find no mention in this chronicle of such a monastery.

[3] *Historia regum Anglorum*, *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores* 75, 2 vols, ed. T. Arnold, *Rolls Series* (London, 1882-1885), vol. 2, p. 85.

Briefly put, in these days this same *gens* (that is the *pagani* attacking the Franks in the years 879-881) had several times troubled and desolated monasteries. Thus, the brothers of the community of Saint Benedict (at Fleury) had had to flee, taking their relics, which were entombed there, and an immense amount of other beautiful and precious things with them.

This part of the *Historia regum Anglorum* was likely written around the year 1000 by Byrhtferth of Ramsey,[1] who had been a pupil of Abbo of Fleury during Abbo's stay at Ramsey from 985 to 987.[2] There can be no doubt at all that it was from Abbo that Byrhtferth got this information, but whether or not Abbo had brought copies of Adrevald's and Adelerius's Miracles/Histories to England is unknown. It does seem, however, that Abbo wrote his *Passio Sancti Eadmundi* in England as a sort of instructional Fleury exemplar for English churchmen to use in writing their own histories and hagiographies, which they most certainly did thereafter.[3]

Louis III, Hugh the Abbot and the Loire Northmen, 880-881

Even though the extent of the Loire Northmen's two defeats - after their incursion to Fleury and a little later on the banks of the Vienne - may have been exaggerated, their strength on the Loire had in all likelihood been much diminished. That Hugh the Abbot did not follow up and crush or expel them was probably because of the new devastations taking place in the north after the arrival of Northmen from England in July 879.[4] These incursions and raids were much more threatening to the young Louis III's position than any remaining Northmen on the Loire.

Following the fight on the Vienne, Louis and Carloman, no doubt accompanied by Hugh the Abbot, had rushed back north to confront the Northmen there as well as to help deal with Louis

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[1] For which see for example: M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the Early Sections of the *Historia regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', in *Anglo-Saxon England 10* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 97-122; P. H. Blair, 'Some observations on the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', in N. K. Chadwick (ed.), *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 63-118; *Symeon of Durham*, ed. Rollason, in D. Rollason (ed.), *Symeon of Durham: Historian of Durham and the North* (Stamford, 1998), pp. xlviii-xlix; C. Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', *English Historical Review*, 97 (1982), pp. 558-82; A. P. Smyth, *The medieval life of King Alfred the Great: a translation and commentary on the text attributed to Asser* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp. 67-69.

[2] E. Ashman Rowe, *Vikings in the West*, p. 56. See also M. Mostert, *The political theology of Abbo of Fleury: A study of the ideas about society and law of the tenth-century monastic reform movement* (Hilversum, 1987); *idem*, 'Relations between Fleury and England', in D. Rollason, C. Leyser, and H. Williams (eds.), *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947)* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 185-210; *idem*, 'Le séjour d'Abbon de Fleury à Ramsey', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 144. 2 (1986), pp. 199-208.

[3] Starting with Byrhtferth's own 'Life of St Oswald', written around the year 1000, for which see M. Lapidge, ed. and trans., *Byrhtferth of Ramsey: The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine* (Oxford and New York, 2009). For a wider discussion of this issue see in general, and in various places, A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great*; *idem*, *The medieval life of King Alfred the Great*.

[4] K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 98.

the Younger.[1] All this is described in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin*, the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* and the *Annals of Fulda* for 880.

Over the course of 880 and until mid-882 while northern France was suffering from the raids of the so-called 'Great Army' whose initial core had come from England in July 879,[2] we hear nothing in any source of any raids or activities made by Alsting's Northmen on the Loire.[3] Were they licking their wounds on one of their island bases and deciding what they should do next? This is certainly possible although it is also possible that in 880 these 'Loire' Northmen were raiding in the Breton district of Vannes.[4]

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[1] The *Annals of Saint-Vaast* (*AV* 880: ed. von Simson, p. 46; trans. Coupland) say that at the beginning of 880: 'Abbot Hugh had no hesitation in coming against him [Louis the Younger] with his lords and allies and a substantial army, and they encamped at the monastery of St Quentin, while King Louis and his army encamped on the banks of the river Oise. After messengers had run back and forth, the aforesaid kings came together and confirmed a peace treaty, which Abbot Hugh arranged between them, and they restored to favour those who had deserted them. This happened in the month of February.'

[2] For the initial fights against these Northmen from England see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 261-75; S. MacLean, 'Charles the Fat and the Viking Great Army: The Military Explanation for the End of the Carolingian Empire', pp. 74-95. For a good assessment of Louis III's two-year reign see Robert Bautier's 'Introduction' in *Recueil des actes de Louis II le Bègue*, *Louis III et Carloman II, rois de France (877-884)*, eds. F. Grat, J. de Font-Réaulx, G. Tessier, and R.-H. Bautier (Paris, 1978) [hereafter *RAL*], pp. XVI-XXXII.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 349: 'Die folgenden Jahre hindurch hören wir recht wenig von den Normannern in der Loire, wissen jedoch bestimmt, daß sie deren Gebiet keineswegs verlassen hatten. Einerseits aber richteten sie ihre Angriffe in diesen Jahren wohlbesonders auf die Bretagne, anderseits war die Aufmerksamkeit der westfrankischen Könige hauptsächlich auf den neuen furchtbaren Einbruch des grossen Heeres in Norden gelenkt, neben dem die Loire-Normannen kaum in Betracht kamen', 'Throughout the following years we hear really nothing of the Northmen on the Loire, we know however for sure that they had in no way left the region. In one way they directed their attacks in these years most particularly on Brittany, on the other hand the attention of the kings of West Francia was primarily concerned with the dreadful new incursion of the Great Army in the North, next to which the Loire Northmen hardly came into consideration.'

[4] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 35, says that the Vannetais was not spared from the Northmen's raids and that 'en 880 les moines de Saint-Gildas de Rhuys et ceux de Locmenech (en Moréac, Morbihan) trouvent précipitamment refuge à Questembert' (dep. Morbihan, inland east of Vannes). I will leave to one side here the question of whether these monks first took refuge at Questembert. The mid-eleventh century *Life and Translations of Saint Gildas* in a chronicle-like section tells of the history of Brittany from the days of Salomon up to Pascweten's death (in early months of 876), of all the devastations of the 'Danish pirates' in Brittany in these years and the coming to power of Pascweten's brother Alan (the Great), which happened in June 876. A.-Y. Bourges, 'Les Vikings dans l'hagiographie bretonne', in M. Coumert and Y. Tranvouez (eds.), *Landévennec, les Vikings et la Bretagne. En hommage à Jean-Christophe Cassard* (Brest, 2015), p. 218, says: 'Ce texte, avec une indéniable puissance d'évocation, rappelle comment la longue guerre de succession consécutive à l'assassinat de Salomon avait favorisé les incursions des Scandinaves, bien connus de l'un des deux prétendants à la couronne ducale, Pascwethen : celui-ci, expose l'auteur, avait en effet été « capturé par les Normands puis racheté » ; il avait été ensuite « tué dans un guet-apens tendu par quelqu'un » (*sed capto a Nortmannis Pasqueteno atque redempto, ac postea a quodam per insidias occiso*).' Then the text says: 'Ea tempestate duo monasteria virorum, Lochmenech, id est locus monachorum, et locus sancti Gildae, effugatis habitatoribus, déserta sunt atque destructa. Quorum habitatores, conjuncti simul, compulsi sunt aliénas petere regiones atque in Byturicensi regione novas ponere sedes, secum deferentes sanctorum corpora, sanctarumque patrocinia, quae tunc temporis apud Britannos festa devotione nimioque venerabantur affectu.' For this part of the *Life and Translations of Saint-Gildas* see *Vita Gidae auctore monacho Rviensi*, ed. T. Mommsen, *MGH, Auctores antiquissimi*, 13. 3 (Berlin, 1898), pp. 101-2; F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne: Gildae vita et translatio (Suite et fin)', *Annales de Bretagne*, 25. 3 (1909), pp. 493-519, at pp. 503-4. The monks of Rhuys certainly eventually arrived in Berry after many unknown peregrinations, and had established themselves on an island in the river Indre sometime before 927 (see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 380-81). If we accept the veracity of this particular text, as does for instance Guillotel (*ibid*., p. 381), then the only real question is when exactly did this initial flight take place? Was it in 880 as Cassard claims or in *c*.888 as Vogel suggested, cf. W. Vogel, *Die*

In any case, finding an opportunity with Louis the Younger's death on 20 January, news of which must have reached Louis III at Compiègne before Easter,[1] Hincmar says that sometime after Easter (8 April) in 882 'the king [Louis III] himself went over the Seine because he wanted to receive the chiefs (*principes*) of the Bretons and make war on the Northmen. He got as far as Tours and there he became seriously ill. He was carried on a bier/litter to the monastery of St-Denis, and in August he died and was buried there'.[2] It is likely that Hugh the Abbot had persuaded or encouraged Louis to do this, and that Hugh had accompanied the by now only perhaps eighteen-year-old king. The *Annals of Saint-Vaast* tell us a little more:

> King Louis made for the Loire, with the intention of driving the Northmen out of his kingdom, and of coming to an agreement (*in amicitiam recipere*) with Hasting (*Alstingus*), which he achieved (*quod et fecit*). But because he was still a young man, he went after a certain girl, the daughter of one Germund, and when she fled into her father's house, the King, who was chasing her on his horse for a joke, scraped his shoulders against the lintel and his chest against the horse's saddle, and injured himself very badly. Thus he fell ill, and after he was brought to St Denis, he died on 5 August, which left the Franks deeply grieving, and he was buried in the church of St Denis. The people sent a message to his brother Carloman, who came to Francia with all speed.[3]

Leaving to one side this story of the circumstances in which Louis III was mortally injured, which in my opinion does rather exhibit a genuine and rather believable oral transmission, and that this *Germund* was certainly incorporated into the later very composite legend of Gormund and Isembart,[4] it is noticeable that the Saint-Vaast annalist does not mention any intention on Louis's part to receive the *principes* of the Bretons as Hincmar said. The *Sermo in tumulatione SS Quintini, Victorici, Cassani*,[5] after discussing the arrival of the Northmen in northern Francia in 879 coming from *transmarinis partibus*, that is from England, then relates that Louis's idea had been to go to Angers and try to make a pact with Alsting (*cum Alstenio*):

Normannen, p. 355. We can never be certain. H. Guillotel (*ibid.*) does not commit himself, but he does seem to me to imply that this flight took place in the early 920s when, of course, there were other Northmen in Brittany.

[1] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 223, n. 1.

[2] *AB* 882: ed. Grat, p. 246; trans. Nelson, p. 223. Regarding the early months of 882, J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 223, n. 1, says 'Hincmar's sequence is blurred'. In my opinion Louis must have gone to Tours in the late spring or early summer of 882, and returned to St Denis shortly thereafter.

[3] *AV* 882: ed. von Simson, p. 52; trans. Coupland.

[4] For which see in the first instance A. Ghidoni, 'Archéologie d'une chanson de geste. Quelques hypothèses sur *Gormund et Isembart*', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 227 (2014), pp. 244-66.

[5] Which were clearly inspired by the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*: see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 66, n. 9.

> Ipso siquidem tempore, cum prefatus rex [Louis III] Andegavis disponeret ire pactumque cum Alstenio facere, in infirmitatem decidit indeque ad Sanctum Dionisium rediit ibique [proch dolor!] spiritum [vitae] exalvit.[1]

The mention of Angers as being Louis's intended destination is noteworthy because Hincmar wrote that Louis had intended to meet with the Breton *principes*, who at this time were Alan I and Judicaël, and Angers was the frontier between Frankish Neustria and the by now much expanded Brittany, and was thus a most logical place to meet. According to Hincmar, Louis only got as far as Tours, but could it be that he had actually got to Angers before returning to Tours? This is not impossible but it is nowhere stated and may be doubted. Perhaps we might look at the idea that Louis had actually done a deal with Alsting, which Hincmar does not say, possibly even *à dessein* as Bauduin queries,[2] suggesting just that Louis wanted to make war on the Loire Northmen. But the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* say that Louis's aim was to come to an agreement with Alsting which was done/achieved (*quod et fecit*).[3]

That some sort of 'convention' or pact had been reached with Alsting is perhaps suggested by the fact that in about September, following Louis's death, his brother Carloman (briefly his successor to the whole kingdom of West Francia) 'learned that the Northman *Asting* and his accomplices had left the Loire and made for the coastal regions'.[4] But if such a pact or peace had been made where could this deal have possibly been struck? In my opinion the Northmen's fleet was based at this time downriver of Angers, perhaps on the island opposite Mont-Glonne which they had used before, or even at or near Nantes. If so, perhaps the meeting to agree a *convention* took place at or near Angers and perhaps it was Hugh the Abbot who negotiated it as King Louis was ill, but this is just speculation. On the other hand, maybe Alsting had just decided it was time to move on to seek new hunting grounds. Whatever the case may have been, 882 does seem to have been the end of an era, because the Northmen do not seem to have returned to the Loire,[5] but more certainly not to Aquitaine proper south of the Loire, until the

[1] *Sermo in tumulatione SS Quintini, Victorici, Cassani,* ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores,* 15. 1 (Hanover, 1887), pp. 271-73.
[2] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 68, n. 4.
[3] P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 68: 'Les termes de la convention ne sont pas autrement détaillés'; F. Grat *et al*, *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, p. 247, n. 5: 'Hastings quitte la Loire en vertu de la convention passée entre lui et le roi Louis III. Cf. *Annales Vedastini*, a. 882'; J.-C. Cassard, 'Les Vikings à Nantes', p. 36: 'Contre le versement d'une grosse somme en bons derniers d'argent, le roi [Louis III] obtient leur départ.'
[4] *AB* 882: ed. Grat, p. 247; trans. Nelson, p. 224.
[5] With one possible exception in about 886 which will be discussed briefly immediately below.

turn of the century,[1] first briefly over the winter of 896-97 and then in 903 when they attacked Tours, both of which will be discussed in the next chapter.

A short summary of 873-882

In comparison with the period examined in the previous chapter the time span considered in this chapter is even harder to get a firm grip on. This is partly because, as Hubert Guillotel quite rightly says, from 874-75: 'Les Annales de Saint-Bertin ne parle guère des affaires bretonnes ; Hincmar de Reims ne devait plus disposer d'information de première main comme auparavant.'[2] Unfortunately Adrevald of Fleury's 'first book' of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* is of no use here. Whilst the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* which start in 874 (*recte* 873) are of some use for us they are mostly concerned with northern Francia.[3] Although the continuator of Adrevald of Fleury, Adelerius, provides some very useful information about the period 878-879, which has been explored above, we are often left with just Regino of Prüm's much-debated *Chronicle* written in about 908 plus various later 'translations' of monastic communities with their saintly relics which are always difficult to substantiate and even more difficult to date.

What we are able to say, however, is that following the withdrawal of the Northmen from Angers in late 873 and after spending the winter on their island base on the Loire these Northmen, who are usually identified as being those of Alsting/Hasting, certainly moved further back down the Loire into Brittany and were soon taken into the employ of the Breton magnate Pascweten to help him in his fight with his opponent Gurwant. This alliance, if one prefers, may

[1] In 887 some of the Northmen who had been besieging Paris came into Burgundy and according to the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*: 'In their usual manner, the Northmen ranged as far as the Saône and the Loire.' See *AV* 887: ed. von Simson, p. 63, trans. Coupland. For this incursion see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 338-41. And then referring to 889 the Saint-Vaast annalist says this: 'After the Lord's nativity he [King Odo] travelled to Aquitaine with a few Franks in order to win the Aquitanians over to himself. When Ramnulf, who was Duke of most of Aquitaine, heard this, he came to him with his retainers, bringing with them the boy Charles [the Simple], the son of King Louis [III], and swore to him fitting oaths on his own and the little lad's behalf, so that Odo would never suspect any ill of him. And when the King had thus been partly accepted by the Aquitanians, he hurriedly returned to Francia on account of the Northmen. For the Danes were ravaging Burgundy, Neustria, and part of Aquitaine in their usual manner, with fire and the sword, resisted by nobody. Around autumn they returned to Paris, where King Odo opposed them. After messengers had crossed between them, they accepted gifts from him and withdrew from Paris. They left the Seine, and making their way by sea on board ships and by land on foot and horseback, they encamped in the Coutances region, near the stronghold of St Lô, which they then besieged unremittingly.' See *AV* 889, 890: ed. von Simson, pp. 67-68; trans. Coupland. I discuss this siege of Saint-Lô a little more below. That the Danes 'were ravaging Burgundy, Neustria, and part of Aquitaine' in 889 is because the Seine Northmen had moved from Meaux at the end of 888 to the the River Loing, a southerly tributary of the Seine, to establish their winter quarters there, and this was a place where Neustria, Aquitaine and Burgundy came together, and thus this explains the report in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* of the ravaging of these areas in 889. See W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 345-46.

[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 354.

[3] The *Annals of Xanten* finish in 874 [=873].

have started in 874 but it certainly continued into 875 or even, perhaps, into early 876. Then in 876-877 we hear little of the 'Loire Northmen', although we know that they had returned to the Loire from the Vannetais because in the latter year a 'tribute' was being raised to pay them to leave. If this tribute was paid, which it probably was, this may have prevented another attack on Tours but it had not induced the Northmen to leave the Loire itself because in 878 Hugh the Abbot persuaded Louis the Stammerer to move against them, which ultimately achieved nothing because Louis had become ill at or near Tours. So, the next year, 879, the Northmen undertook a second attack on the monastery at Fleury, although just afterwards whilst pursuing the community they suffered a setback at the hands of Hugh the Abbot and Count Girbold of Auxerre. This was followed up later by a more substantial defeat of the Northmen on or near the Vienne in November. Thereafter the Northmen - Alsting's I would say - were either licking their wounds and regrouping or, just perhaps, they made a raid into Breton Morbihan in 880.

By the spring of 882, and after Louis the Younger's death on 20 January, Louis III the son of Louis the Stammerer moved once again across the Seine to confront 'Alsting's' Northmen and the Bretons. But like his father before him Louis became ill, perhaps because of an accident when he was pursuing a young girl, and after staying at Tours for some time he withdrew northwards. An agreement with the Northmen may have been made while Louis was at Tours, perhaps intermediated by Hugh the Abbot, because later in the year after Louis's death his brother and successor Carloman heard that Alsting's Northmen had left the Loire. What they possibly did after this is explored below.

Alsting, Brittany and the Loire, 882-890

After Alsting, or Hasting if one prefers, had left the Loire in 882 for some 'coastal regions', where had he and his fleet actually gone to?

Janet Nelson assumes with some confidence that 'by "coastal regions" Hincmar means the coast of Francia between Frisia and the Seine, where other Viking forces were now active'.[1]

[1] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, p. 224, n. 11; followed by A. Gautier, 'Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs?', pp. 32, 34; which is taken into his French article 'Nature et mode d'action des bandes armées vikings: quelques réflexions sur la seconde moitié du IXe siècle', pp. 79, 81, written after but published before the English article. We might wish to consider here the various reports about the important siege of *Ascloha/Haslao* (probably Asselt near to Roermond in the province of Limburg rather than Elsloo on the Meuse north of Maasricht as used to be believed) in July of 882, for which see in the first instance W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 289-94; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 199-223; S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, p. 187, n. 290; *idem*, 'Charles the Fat and the Viking Great Army: The Military Explanation for the End of the Carolingian Empire', p. 81. For the location of the siege see A. d'Haenens, *Les invasions Normandes en Belgique au IXe siècle*, pp. 312-15. This siege was undertaken by Charles the Fat against the Scandinavian chieftains installed at Asselt including Sigfrid, who was the primary leader of the Northmen who later besieged Paris in 885/886, and possibly also the former joint king of Denmark with his brother Hálfdan in 873, and who

This is not at all clear. We do not in fact hear of Alsting by name until eight years later, in 890, when he was operating on the Somme and, perhaps significantly, in close connection with the

died in Frisia in 887, Godfrid, likely a close relative of the earlier Godfrid Haraldsson who was granted Rorik's former possessions in Frisia in 882, who married Charles the Fat's daughter Gisela in the same year, and who was murdered in 885, and Wurm, probably Gorm or Gudrum; for all of which see P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, pp. 199-223. But the Bavarian continuator of the *Annals of Fulda* (*AF* 882 (B): ed. Kurze, p. 108; trans. Reuter, p. 105) adds that besides the 'kings' (*regibus*) Sigfrid and Godfrid and the 'prince' Wurm there was also there a 'prince' (they are called *principes*) called Hals. Now the Bavarian author of this continuation of the *Annals of Fulda* was most likely 'present at the siege of Asselt, or [...] had access to an eyewitness report', and 'the Bavarian continuator [...] appears to be by far the most reliable witness to the actual events of the 882 siege': S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, p. 35; see also P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 204, n. 2. Hence, I think we should accept that a Scandinavian prince/chieftain called Hals was at Asselt in July 882. But does the name Hals not rather remind us of the name Hasting/Alsting? Could they in fact be the same name? I deem this eminently possible. But could they even be the same person? Janet Nelson's view, as just mentioned, is that Alsting after leaving the Loire in 882 had gone to 'the coast of Francia between Frisia and the Seine, where other Viking forces were now active'. Of course, as will be discussed briefly below, the general scholarly opinion is that Hasting/Alsting was probably mostly heavily involved in Brittany from 882 until his first reported appearance on the Somme in 890, although most of this is just conjecture. The main problem with trying to identify Hals with Hasting/Alsting is chronological. Louis III had, as I have suggested, gone to Tours (it seems with the plan of reaching Angers and with the intention, as the annalist of Saint-Vaast says, of 'driving the Northmen out of his kingdom, and of coming to an agreement (*in amicitiam recipere*) with Hasting (*Alstingus*)' sometime after Easter 882. His brother Carloman seems to have received news of 'Asting's' departure from the Loire in about September 882, although this dating, which comes from Hincmar's rather garbled reporting in this the year of his death, is not at all clear. In any case this departure from the Loire obviously took place at some time prior to this date; but how early? If Alsting was the same person as Hals at Asselt then he must have left the Loire by about June 882. Given the data we have this is not completely impossible. I will not go so far here as to propose this identification of Hals and Alsting, maybe there were two chieftains of this name (related or not); nevertheless, this whole nexus may be worth future scholarly consideration. When pondering this question, I looked to see whether it had been raised by any earlier historians. Rather surprisingly (or perhaps not) I found that one has to go back to nineteenth-century German historians for any consideration of this matter. In 1834 Johann Martin Lappenberg (*Geschichte von England*, vol. 1 (Hamburg, 1834), p. 324, n.1) said regarding the case of Alsting/Hasting in 882: 'Wir dürfen, da wir Alsting oder Hasting auf diese Wanderung wissen [to England in 892], ihn um so eher auch in dem normannischen Königsnamen Hals, der in diesem Jahre [882] bei Haslo [Asselt] gegenwärtig war, suchen', 'We should seek this Alsting or Hasting, who we know from this move [to England in 892], in the earlier royal/king's name Hals, who in this year [882] was at Haslo'; Lappenberg references here the Bavarian continuation of the *Annals of Fulda s.a.* 882. On the other hand, in 1865 E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches* (1st edn 1865, vol. 2, p. 206 and n. 17; 2nd edn 1888, vol. 3, pp. 204-5) wrote: 'Während Karl in Juli vor Elsloo lag, zog Ludwig über die Seine an die Grenze der Bretagne, in der Hoffnung, dass die bretonische Fürsten sich mit ihm zur Bekämpfung der Loiredänen vereinigen würden. Als ihm dies fehlgeschlagen und seine eigenen Streitkräfte für das vorgesetzte Ziel nicht ausreichten, ließ er sich zu Tours in Unterhandlungen mit dem normannischen Führer Hasting ein, die im Herbste in der That dessen Abzug zur folge hatten', but that: 'Es ist schon aus chronologischen Gründen ganz unzulässig Hasting und Hals zussamenzuwerfen, wie es Lappenberg will', 'Whilst Charles [the Fat] was at Elsloo, Louis [III] moved over the Seine to the borders of Brittany, in the hope that the Breton princes would join with him to fight the Loire Danes. When this idea fell through and his own combat-forces were not sufficient for the primary objective he contented himself at Tours with entering into negotiations with the Northmen's leader Hasting, who in fact in the autumn did, as a consequence, withdraw [...] It is thus on chronological grounds quite inadmissable to throw together Hasting and Hals as Lappenberg wants to'. See also K. von Kalckstein, 'Abt Hugo', p. 112 and n. 3. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence that Louis III had moved to the borders of Brittany (by which I presume Lappenberg here means to Angers) in July when the siege of Asselt was taking place. All we know it that he left sometime after Easter and was already at Tours in May to early June 882 and seems to have then left there for the north, where he died on 5 August. The whole question here hinges on whether Alsting left the Loire in the autumn of 882, as is usually contended, but which is just an assumption, or earlier in time for him to get to Asselt. I will accept for the time being the chronological unlikelihood of Alsting and Hals being the same person, although that they bore the same name is possible.

Seine Northmen's attack on Saint-Lô (dep. Manche) and the subsequent defeat of the 'Danes by the Bretons', in 889-890, and their return to Francia.[1]

One theory was proposed by Vogel, based in large part on the interpretation of La Borderie.[2] In brief, his idea is that from 882 until 885 'Hasting' was raiding along the northern coasts of Brittany, precipitating the flight of various bishops and monks and their saintly relics.[3] But as

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[1] *AV* 889 and 890: ed. von Simson, pp. 67-68; trans. Coupland: 'For the Danes were ravaging Burgundy, Neustria, and part of Aquitaine in their usual manner, with fire and the sword, resisted by nobody. Around autumn [889] they returned to Paris, where King Odo opposed them. After messengers had crossed between them, they accepted gifts from him and withdrew from Paris. They left the Seine, and making their way by sea on board ships and by land on foot and horseback, they encamped in the Coutances region, near the stronghold of St Lô, which they then besieged unremittingly. [890] Being trapped in this self-same siege, [Bishop] Lista of the aforesaid town [Saint-Lô] breathed his last, and since the most distinguished men in the said stronghold had been exterminated by the sword, the fortifications of the stronghold were eventually captured, its inhabitants killed, and the stronghold itself completely razed to the ground. But the Bretons manfully defended their kingdom, and forced the badly defeated Danes to go back to the Seine. And on the eve of the feast of All Saints [1 November], the Danes entered the Oise by way of the Seine and headed for Noyon, to pitch their camp for the winter. And King Odo ran into those who were making their way overland near Guerbigny, but because of the unsuitability of the area he was unable to inflict many losses on them. So the Northmen completed the journey which they had begun, and encamped facing the town. But Hasting (*Alstingus*) and his men secured their base at Argoeuves on the Somme. And King Odo, having assembled his army, camped on the river Oise to stop them [Alsting's Northmen?] devastating the kingdom at will.' The attack on Saint-Lô in 889-890 had certainly originated from the Seine as the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* say, and for which see just for example P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 111, 129; J. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IXe siècle', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves* (Caen, 2005), pp. 161-79, at pp. 169-73; *idem*, 'Un exode de reliques dans les pays de la basse Seine à la fin du IXe siècle', *Bulletin de la Commission Départementale des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime*, XLVI (1998), pp. 136-188; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 363-64; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 40-41; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 358-59; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 333-34; *ASC s.a.* 889-890: ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 82-83; and Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, *s.a.* 890: trans. MacLean, p. 208. But had Alsting/Hasting participated in it as well? The close connection between him and the return of the Northmen from Saint-Lô in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* might suggest this was so, although whether Alsting/Hasting had himself accompanied the other 'Seine' Northmen to Saint-Lô can never be established.

[2] Cf. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 328-41; although there are certain differences between Vogel's and La Borderie's reconstructions on a number of issues - particularly regarding the years in which the 'Loire Northmen' were attacking the coasts of northern Brittany. Vogel places these in the 880s while La Borderie places them between 878 and 882 (see below).

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 350-353 and notes. J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 36-38, also argues that the north coast of Brittany was attacked by the Northmen from the Loire in the 880s. He even places the events described in Bili's *Life of Saint-Malo* at this time and not in the early 870s as is nowadays conventionally contended; as does A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 326. N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 36/354, says: 'Hásteinn had left the Loire Vikings [in 882] under the terms of his agreement with Louis III and may have begun raiding northern Brittany (de la Borderie 1898, 326-8; Smith 1985) and in 884 *Uurmonoc* (XXI) records a raid on the Ile Lavret monastery.' Besides La Borderie, Price is referencing here J. M. H. Smith's *Carolingian Brittany*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Oxford University, 1985). Leaving to one side the question of whether Hásteinn (that is Alsting/Hasting) was already on the Loire in 869, which I believe he probably was, that he had somehow split off from the 'Loire Vikings' in 882 is just imagination and is not supported by any source. Although Price references La Borderie here (*Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 326-28, which pages are well worth reading in their entirety), La Borderie does not say this. In fact in these pages he is discussing what he calls the 'Courses des Normands d'Hasting (878-882)', from the Loire and mainly in northern Brittany : 'Les Normands qui infestaient si cruellement la Bretagne vers 878, c'était toujours les hordes d'Hasting', and 'Nul doute que, de 878 à 882, beaucoup de points du littoral breton n'aient eu à subir de la part d'Hasting et de ses bandes de semblables violences.' Indeed after recapping his view that 'Hasting' had taken command of the 'bandes et flottes piratiques établies dans la Loire' in 866, fought in 869 against Gurwant and Salomon, captured Angers in 873 and commanded the Northmen of the Loire until 882, he adds that this was the 'époque où, par suite d'un traité avec le roi Louis III, il quitta la Loire suivi de ses bandes, émigra en Flandre et en Picardie, puis demeura en paix plusieurs années et ne revint jamais dans l'Ouest'. Hence in La Borderie's view, as later in Janet Nelson's

Vogel himself acknowledged these flights and their dates are based on 'more or less unsure traditions'.[1] Even when we can be sure that certain of these flights of clerics from northern Brittany really took place some can reasonably be dated to later periods. After this Vogel has 'Hasting' returning to the Loire in 886: 'Wahrscheinlich führen die Normannen von neuem in den Loirestrom ein. Wir können vermuten, daß es Hasting war, der von der Verwüstung der bretonischen Nordküste wieder zu seinen alten Quartieren zurückkehrte', 'The Northmen probably came once again to the river Loire. We can suppose that it was Hasting who once again returned to his former quarters from his depredation of the north coasts of Brittany'.[2] Or, according to J.-C. Cassard, after the departure of 'Hasting' from the Loire in 882: 'Dès 886 les mêmes, ou d'autres, sont de retour à Nantes et l'évêque Landramme choisit de s'éclipser de sa cité.'[3] This idea is based solely on a report found in chapter 21 of Merlet's reconstruction of the *Chronicle of Nantes*.[4] This text says that on hearing of the death of Salomon the Northmen started to return to the Loire as far as Nantes, destroying everything. Fearing these Northmen Bishop Landran of Nantes (and his clergy) had to flee his seat to find the protection of Bishop Raino of Angers with the agreement (*audiens*) of King Charles, that is probably of Charles III

(see above), in 882 'Hasting' went straight from the Loire to, as he puts it, Flanders and Picardy, and his many years of peace there is clearly referring to 'Hasting's' sudden reappearance in the record on the Somme in 890. In fact, for La Borderie Hasting was later replaced by some unknown Northmen who were 'pire que lui' (*ibid*., p. 326). These Northmen were different to those of Hasting who had not had the idea 'd'occuper [...] le sol breton, de s'y implanter à demeure dans des positions fortes en expulsant ou détruisant alentour la population' (*ibid*., p. 328). Hasting, it seems to La Borderie, was replaced by some mysterious and unidentified 'nouvelles hordes normandes en Bretagne' between 884 and 888 (*ibid*., pp. 328-30), come from where we are not told, who had 'd'autres visées' (*ibid*., p. 328).

[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 352, my translation.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 354, my translation.

[3] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 35; *idem* 'Les Vikings à Nantes', p. 36. R. Merlet (*La chronique de Nantes*, p. 66, n. 3) explains his dating of 'le renouvellement des hostilités sur les bords de la Loire' to 866 'at the earliest' by bringing together the events of 882 as reported by the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* and the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story (cf. Dudo, ed. Lair, pp. 136-37) of a 'four-year truce' between 'Hasting' and the Franks. This is doubtful in the extreme and seems to be Merlet rather grasping at straws. Merlet also references É. Mabille's view ('Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 185, n. 2, and p. 186, n. 3) that the invasion of the Northmen is posterior to 13 December 885 and anterior to the month of June 887. Merlet concludes, 'En résumé, on peut considérer comme certain que la fuite de Landran de Nantes à Angers date de l'été de 886'. A. de La Borderie (*Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 329) says: 'Dès 886, les pirates remontèrent ce fleuve, prirent Nantes et dévastèrent tout le comté Nantais. L'évèque Landramn, successeur d'Hermengar sur ce siège, s'enfuit devant ce fléau et alla demander un asile contre les Normands au roi Charles le Gros, qui lui assigna pour résidence Angers et lui donna, pour son entretien et celui de ses clercs, le revenu de certains domaines royaux situés dans les environs. Accueilli et traité avec honneur par Rainon évêque d'Angers, Landramn resta près de lui jusqu'au moment où l'expulsion des Normands hors de Bretagne lui permit de rentrer dans son diocèse.' N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 36/354, simply follows La Borderie by saying: 'Brittany found itself the target of renewed raiding in 886, and in the latter part of the year the county of Nantes was overrun and the city captured. Alain of Broweroch was able to maintain only a guerrilla force to fight them (de la Borderie 1898, 329).'

[4] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. XXI, pp. 66-68. For a discussion of the manuscripts containing this 'chapter' see *ibid*., pp. XIV-XVI, p. 66, nn. 1-4.

'the Fat' and not Charles the Bald,[1] and that Landran and his clerics were given royal properties in the city. The chapter ends by referring to Landran's return to Brittany and him being granted a domain called *Canabiacum* by Alan I.[2] Subsequently Vogel has the Northmen using the lower Loire near Nantes in 887 and 888 as their base to make plundering raids deep into Brittany,[3] and not yet being opposed by Alan I and Judicaël who were still struggling with each other. But eventually the Bretons started to collect their forces and coordinated via messengers where and when they would confront the Northmen. But Judicaël in his eagerness did not wait for Alan's arrival and attacked the Northmen, and whilst he killed thousands of them, he himself met his death. Alan then collected his forces and met the Northmen in battle in the autumn of 888

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[1] R. Merlet (*ibid*., p. 66, n. 4) suggests that because Charles the Fat had been in 'France' during the summer and the autumn of 886, this is when Bishop Landran must have had 'recours à lui'. A view followed by J.-C. Cassard, 'Les Vikings à Nantes', p. 36.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 68. See also W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 250, n. 1, p. 354 and n. 2. This flight of Bishop Landran to Angers cannot be placed in 876 in Charles the Bald's reign as suggested by K. von Kalckstein, *Abt Hugo*, p. 69, and J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 2, p. 267, because Actard's immediate successor as the bishop of Nantes, Hermengar (*Armengarius*), was still alive on 12 June 878 (see *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. CCXXXV p. 183), and as far as we know Bishop Raino only took office at Angers in 880 (for which see L. Duchesne, *Les anciens catalogues épiscopaux de la province de Tours* (Paris, 1890), pp. 59-64). Thus Vogel (*ibid*., p. 250, n. 1) says that *contra* von Kalckstein and Steenstrup (*ibid*.) the Northmen cannot have completely left the Loire for Brittany (implicitly in 873) only to make a new raid on Nantes in 876. In fact, Vogel places this return of the Northmen to Nantes in the summer or autumn of 886 - as do J.-C. Cassard and R. Merlet - but the move of Bishop Landran to Angers in 887 (*ibid*., p. 250, n. 1, and p. 354, n. 2). He also asks whether the Northmen had stayed over the winter of 886 to 887 at Nantes (*ibid.*, p 354, n. 2). Yet, in addition, Vogel (*ibid*., pp. 354-55, and p. 355, n. 1) also suggests that 'it can hardly be doubted' that the Northmen also reached Tours where they burned down Saint-Martin's cloister outside the city's walls. This is highly unlikely and should be discounted. The idea is based on Vogel's own overreliance on É. Mabille's analysis and dating of the return of Saint Martin's relics to Tours to 887 (see his 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire'), which P. Gasnault ('Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes') has convincingly shown actually took place in 877 and there is no evidence that any Northmen returned to Tours in the 880s. Regarding Landran's subsequent 'return' to Nantes, the conventional view was given by Pierre Hyacinthe Morice in C. Taillandier (ed.), *Histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Bretagne, composée sur les auteurs et les titres originaux, ornée de divers monumens, et enrichie d'un catalogue historique des évêques de Bretagne, et d'un noveau supplément des preuves*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1756), p. XV: 'Les Normands ayant été chassés entiérement du pays l'an 889, Landran retourna à son église désolée. Alain-le-Grand lui rendit une partie des terres qui avaient été usurpées sur le patrimoine de l'église. Après avoir fait tous ses efforts pour en réparer les ruines, il mourut le 5 de février 896.' According to A. de La Borderie (*Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 333), after Questembert (placed in 888): 'Dès que les Normands eurent quitté le pays Nantais, l'évêque Landramm quitta lui-même Angers pour rentrer dans Nantes.' The long charter for this donation, dated 889, is reproduced as chapter 22 of the *Chronicle of Nantes*: *ibid*., chap. XXII, pp. 68-72. It is extensively discussed in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints*, pp. 365-67, followed closely by J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, pp. 61-62. Supposedly Bishop Landran was given the domain of *Canabiacum*, which H. Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 365-67) identified as 'perhaps' being at Cavigny (dep. Manche, arr. Saint-Lô, cant. Saint-Jean-de-Laye). In this idea he is following René Merlet. On the other hand, Bernand Tanguy had doubts regarding this location and suggested perhaps Changny or Chennegy; as quoted in J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 61, n. 239. I will not analyse this matter further here. Just with regard to Bishop Landran, the idea that he had 'returned' to Nantes in 889 only after the Northmen had been entirely chased from the region is an assumption of historians based on a belief in the previous chapter of the *Chronicle of Nantes* (chap. 21) recording Landran's flight to Angers. All that this donation to Landran really seems to prove for our purposes is that Landran was probably at Nantes in 889.

[3] As mentioned earlier, W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 355 and n. 3, would have the flights of the monks of Saint-Gildas of Rhuys and those of Locmenech happening in the summer of 888 rather than in 880 as proposed by Cassard, in which he is following La Borderie (*ibid*., p. 330).

'probably in the plain of Questembert [dep. Morbihan] east of Vannes', where he decisively defeated them.[1] Now all this is mostly based on a story of Regino which we will examine below, but what is important is that for Vogel both these battles happened in 888. Also, the idea of Questembert for Alan's victory was not original to Vogel, many other French, Breton and German historians had proposed it before; most extensively La Borderie,[2] but the whole dossier really goes back to Pierre Le Baud.[3]

It has also been taken up more recently with some minor chronological modifications by Cassard. Based on the evidence of Regino, Cassard's opinion is that there was an initial victory won by Judicaël in early 890 which, he says, took place somewhere in the *pays* of Rennes (at the border of the county of Coutances or in the *Bas-Cotentin*), and a second victory in the same year won by Alan I, most likely on the lower Loire.[4] But he also thinks that there may have been a 'third' battle, perhaps even at Questembert, which had *jalonné* the path leading to these twin victories of 890; perhaps in 888 or 889?[5] What is important to note here is that Cassard explicitly states that the victories of Judicaël and of Alan (both in 890) had been won against

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[1] Vogel's dating here (*Die Normannen*, p. 356, and nn. 1, 2, p. 357) is based on that of A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 328-34; *idem*, 'La chronologie du cartulaire de Redon', *Annales de Bretagne*, XIII (Rennes, 1897-98), pp. 275, 605; *idem*, 'Examen chronologique des chartes du cartulaire de Redon antérieures au XIe siècle [second article]', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 25 (1864), pp. 393-434, at pp. 405-7. La Borderie's interpretation of the two Redon charters concerned here has been strongly criticised by Hubert Guillotel: see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 365. The location of this supposed battle at Questembert is given only by the late fifteenth-century writer Pierre Le Baud: *Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 125. Once again simply following La Borderie, N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 36/354, says: 'By 888 the power-struggle between Alain of Vannes and Judicael had intensified to such a degree that no resistance was offered to the Scandinavians, and the Loire Vikings were able to occupy western Brittany completely (*Regino* 890). The death of Judicael in battle with the invaders left Alain in command of the Breton forces, and he led a united army to a great victory at Questembert, driving the Vikings back to the mouth of the Loire (see de la Borderie 1898, 494-5 for a discussion of the battle)'; see also pp. 331-32.

[2] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 329-32. See also Carl [*sic*] von Kalckstein, *Geschichte des französischen Königthums unter den ersten Capetingern*, vol. 1, *der Kampf der Robertiner und Karolinger* (Leipzig, 1877), pp. 63-64, who follows the same line.

[3] P. Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne*, pp. 125-27. René Merlet (*La chronique de Nantes*, p. 67, nn, 1, 2) after mentioning the death of Pascweten (which he places in 877 and not in 876) says that his brother Alan and Judicaël (who he makes count of Rennes) shared the government of the whole of Brittany, but that there was *dans la suite* a long struggle between the two regarding this partition. And that in 886 Alan courageously combatted the Northmen, who profiting from the dissentions between the Breton princes had invaded the *pays* of Vannes up to the river Blavet. And then in 888 Alan and Judicaël, having finally united all their forces, managed in a decisive battle to chase from Brittany the major part of their adversaries. This battle, says Merlet, took place at Questembert near to Vannes. Judicaël died in this battle (which H. Guillotel has shown cannot have been the case) and Alan became the sole *duc* of all of Brittany. Finally, he refers to the fact that A. de La Borderie places all these events, the battle at Questembert, the death of Judicaël and the election of Alan as *duc* of Brittany, between 1 August and 8 November 888.

[4] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 40-41. Without stating it here Cassard is, partially at least, accepting both Le Baud and La Borderie (see note below).

[5] For which see J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 39-42. Earlier (in 1991) Cassard ('Les Vikings à Nantes', p. 36), had written that Alan 'aurait écrasé les intrus et repris leur camp fortifé de l'île de Bièce 888'; a statement which contains the assumption of a battle won at or near Nantes in 888 (and not in 890) and that hitherto, and apparently for a long time, the Northmen (of *Alsting*?) had had their base on the island of *Betia*.

quite distinct bands of Northmen.[1] I would tend to agree.[2] Those Northmen who Judicaël defeated (during which battle Judicaël may or may not have met his death) were possibly those who had come from the Seine to Saint-Lô in late 889; whilst those defeated by Alan were very likely those originally from the Loire, indeed even perhaps under Alsting/Hasting.[3]

All of these ideas are based on certain interpretations of Regino of Prüm's story under his conglomerate year of 890, which is seen by all these historians as really covering the few years leading up to 890,[4] coupled with chapter 21 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* and the charter of 889 reproduced in chapter 22.

Regino's story first tells of the Northmen leaving the Seine (actually in late 889) and moving their fleet 'to the area of Coutances which is called Saint-Lô'. Then we are told of the siege of

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[1] See also J.-C. Cassard, 'Avant les Normands', pp. 101-2.

[2] La Borderie's reconstruction, based in part on Pierre Le Baud, was a little different to Cassard's (cf. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 333-34). Whilst admitting that there were two battles in 890, he has these both being against the Northmen who had come from the Seine: 'Les Normands attaquaient de nouveau la Bretagne [889-90]. Oh ! ce n'était pas ceux qui avaient subi la terrible défaite de Questembert, ceux-là n'étaient pas tentés d'y revenir, mais il y en avait tant qu'on avait beau en tuer il s'en retrouvait toujours. Ceux-ci provenaient, croit-on, des bandes qui avaient assiégé Paris quelques années auparavant, ravagé depuis lors la Bourgogne et la Champagne, puis redescendu la Seine jusqu'à son embouchure, d'où se dirigeant vers l'Ouest ils vinrent en 890 débarquer dans le Cotentin et assiéger la ville de Saint-Lô qui appartenait alors à la Bretagne.' He then gives a brief résumé of the siege of Saint-Lô culminating in the massacre of all the inhabitants including, first, the bishop, after which he says these Northmen 'se jetèrent sur la Bretagne proprement dite, dans le dessein de venger l'écrasement subi deux ans plus tôt en ce pays par leurs compatriotes. Pour diviser les forces des Bretons, ils dirigèrent contre eux une double attaque, l'une sur le comté de Rennes, l'autre plus au Sud sur le comté de Nantes. Mais depuis le rétablissement de l'unité monarchique par Alain le Grand, il n'y avait plus de division chez les Bretons, plus de rivalité entre les comtes de Rennes et de Nantes, tous étaient prêts à repousser avec ensemble les attaques de l'étranger ; le fils de ce Judicaël qui deux ans plus tôt s'était fait tuer vaillamment sur le Blavet, le petit-fils de Gurwant - Bérenger comte de Rennes - le prouva bien en cette circonstance'. La Borderie then references Le Baud: 'D'après les anciennes chroniques aujourd'hui perdues, fidèlement résumées par Pierre Le Baud, voici le résultat de la double attaque des pirates: 'Les Normans (dit-il) oppressèrent par leur subite venue le peuple breton, parce que les princes du pays n'estoient pas assez appareillez à leur résister (allusion à la prise de Saint-Lô); mais après s'assemblèrent partie desdits Bretons sous le comte Berenger de Rennes, et firent bataille près le fleuve Coynon (Coësnon) contre une multitude desdits Normans qu'ils occirent […] Et Alain le Grand, avec l'autre partie des Bretons qu'il cueillit, assaillit une autre compagnie desdits Normans [some from Saint- Lô says La Borderie even though Le Baud says this was 'une autre compagnie desdits Normans'] assez près du fleuve de Loire, dont il occist la plupart et les autres s'enfuirent. Et ainsi chassèrent les Bretons les Normans de leur région.' La Borderie finishes with a certain flourish, 'Cette fois, les enragés pirates se le tinrent pour dit, et jusqu'à la fin du règne d'Alain le Grand qui dura encore dix-sept années (jusqu'en 907), non seulement ils respectèrent la Bretagne, mais (dit un de nos chroniqueurs [that is the *Chronicle of Nantes*]) ils n'osèrent même pas la regarder de loin'. In my opinion putting aside La Borderie's view that these attacks in 890 into Brittany *propre* were to avenge the defeat of the Northmen of the Loire two years earlier, which makes no sense because there is no evidence linking the 'Great Army' on the Seine and the Loire Northmen before this date, that the 'Saint-Lô Northmen' had gone in 890 from there to the banks of the lower Loire rather defies belief.

[3] Of course, this implies that after Bishop Landran had returned to Nantes in 889 the Loire Northmen were still lurking somewhere in the area.

[4] It is quite certain that Regino's story, all under the year 890, is as is very usual a composite one covering the years *c*.888 to 890; cf. for example S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 208, n. 391.

Saint-Lô, how it ended and how the bishop was killed.[1] This is all in accordance with the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* and even the borrowing from a Frankish source of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.[2]

But Regino then tells another story regarding the Northmen in Brittany, starting with the general but vague words 'at that time'. The question is whether this story concerns the Northmen who had come from the Seine or another group operating further south which had probably come from the Loire. This passage is of such importance for any interpretation of the Northmen's activities in the late 880s that we should reproduce it in full:

> At that time [supposedly roughly around 890 or before] there was a serious dispute between the leaders [*duces*] of the Bretons, Alan and Judicael, concerning the division of the realm. Finding the Bretons thus split and divided, not so much in terms of territory as in their minds, the pagans confidently attacked them. For as long as they considered the war to be a private one for each of them rather than a communal struggle, they refused to bring help to each other, as if a victory for one were not a victory for all, and they were deeply harmed by the enemy.[3] Everywhere they yielded, and all their possessions were plundered up to the River Blavet. Then for the first time they understood how much damage was being done to them by their discord, and how much strength it gave to their opponents. Reassuring each other through the exchange of embassies, they agreed a time and place to meet, and planned to wage war with joined forces.[4] Then Judicael, who was the younger, desiring to increase the glory of his own reputation, joined battle without waiting for Alan and his men. He killed many thousands of the enemy and forced the rest to flee to a certain village. But when he rashly pursued them further than he should have, he was killed by them, because he did not know that while it is good to win, it is not good

[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 135; trans. MacLean, p. 208: 'They moved their fleet to the frontiers of Brittany. They besieged a certain fortress in the area of Coutances which is called Saint-Lô. They cut off all access to the water source and, when the townspeople dried up with thirst, terms of surrender were arranged: the Northmen would leave them with their lives but take away everything else. When the inhabitants emerged from the stronghold these treacherous people profaned the faith and the promise they had given, and butchered them all without a second thought. Among those they killed was the bishop of the church of Coutances.'

[2] *ASC* 890, MSS A, B, C, D, E: 'And the same year [889] the raiding-army went from the Seine to St Lô, which is between the Bretons and the Franks; and [890] the Bretons fought against them and had the vicory, and drove them out into a river and drowned many' (ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 82, 83). Like all mentions of the Great Army in France from 879 to 892 this entry in the *ASC* is not due the fact that a contemporaneous English writer was well informed about events in France but rather that he clearly borrowed from a Continental set of annals similar to the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*, which he added retrospectively and *en bloc* after this army returned to England in 892; for which see in the first instance A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 489-90, 552. The only extra interesting piece of information not contained in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* is that the Bretons had driven the Northmen into a river where many were drowned. This, if it happened, must have been on the Couesnon or, possibly, on the Vire.

[3] As pointed out by S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 208, n. 394, this closely follows Justin.

[4] Once again drawing on Justin; see S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 209, n. 395.

> to push your victory too far; for [the enemy's] desperation is dangerous. After this Alan, when he had united all of Brittany in this way, vowed that if he could overcome his enemies through divine power he would send to Rome a tenth part of all his goods for God and St Peter. When all the Bretons had given sureties for the same vow he advanced to war and, engaging in battle, routed the enemy with such a slaughter that barely 400 men out of 15,000 returned to their fleet.[1]

This story starts with a 'serious dispute' between Alan and Judicaël, which division provided the opportunity for the 'pagans' to return to Brittany. We do not know when this dispute began but it was clearly before 890. Had it started immediately after the deaths of Pascweten and Gurwant in early 876, and been a continuation of their struggle, and continued until Judicaël's death, as suggested by Julia Smith?[2] It will be remembered perhaps that after telling of Pascweten's and Gurwant's deaths (in early 876) Regino wrote that Alan and Judicaël divided Brittany between themselves but that 'there were many disputes and wars between them as well' until Judicaël's death when Alan took control of all of Brittany.[3] Hubert Guillotel basically ignores this Breton dispute, just referring on one occasion to Judicaël who had 'un temps disputa la prééminence en Bretagne à Alain le Grand', without indicating any date or even time period.[4]

On the other hand, earlier generations of historians invariably had no hesitation in using Regino's report to flesh out and support their own interpretations of the history of Brittany and of the Northmen in the 880s. These include La Borderie, Merlet, von Kalckstein, Vogel, and, not to forget, Le Baud, but also many more. Although these historians differ a little the one from the other, generally on the precise chronology, they all believe that the attacks of the Northmen reported by Regino and the battles with Judicaël and Alan, to use Vogel's words, 'certainly did not stand in any way in relation/connection with the incursion of the Great Army

[1] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, p. 135; trans. MacLean, pp. 208-9. S. MacLean, *History and Politics*, p. 209, n. 397, says: 'The numbers of men given by Regino, as in most early medieval histories, are to be read as indications of orders of magnitude rather than reliable figures.' A useful French translation of this passage is given in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 364-65.

[2] J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 121-22. Smith places Judicaël's death in 888 or 889, despite the analysis of Hubert Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 364-67), and she concludes: 'If tensions between eastern and western Brittany did in fact precede Alan's emergence as sole ruler of all of Brittany, then this rule represents the predominance of south-eastern over western Brittany.'

[3] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*: ed. Kurze, pp. 109-10; trans. MacLean, p. 173.

[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 358.

into the Cotentin', 'Diese Kämpfe [...] gar nicht in Zussammenhang mit dem Einfall des großen Heeres in Cotentin standen'.[1]

Certainly Regino's report of the river Blavet as being where the Northmen reached suggests that he was writing here of Scandinavian incursions into south-eastern Brittany, and indeed most likely from the Loire, because the Blavet finds its source in north-western Brittany (at Bulat-Pestivien, dep. Côtes-d'Armor), and it then flows south through Morbihan and empties into the Atlantic Ocean near to Lorient (dep. Morbihan). It is rather difficult to imagine that the 'Great Army' from the Seine had come so far south following the siege of Saint-Lô over the winter of 889-890, a fact that Guillotel and others gloss over by simply ignoring it.[2]

Let us now return to Vogel's interpretation of these events. After the purported defeat at Questembert, Vogel asks if the remaining Northmen (*unter Hasting?*) had perhaps remained 'south of the Loire'.[3] This is pure speculation. He then adds later: 'Hasting taucht 890 plötzlich an der Somme auf, und es erscheint recht wohl möglich, daß er, ja früher die Loire-Normannen befehligt hatte, auch 886-890 an der Loire kommandierte und jetzt erst infolge der Niederlage bei Nantes die Loire verließ und zur Somme segelte', 'Hasting suddenly turns up on the Somme,

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 356, n. 2. K. von Kalckstein, *Geschichte des französischen königthums unter den ersten Capetingern* (Leipzig, 1877), p. 63, possibly rightly says: 'Die Normannen hatten wohl ihre Angriffe von der Loire her lange vor Ankunft der von der Seine kommenden Schaaren begonnen und verheerten, während die Fürsten haderten, die ganze Bretagne bis zum Blavet, der sich beim heutigen l'Orient [Lorient] ins atlantische Meer ergiesst', 'The Northmen had certainly begun their attacks from the Loire long before the arrival of the bands coming from the Seine, and had ravaged the whole of Brittany up to the Blavet, which emptied into the Atlantic Ocean at present day Lorient, whilst the princes [of Brittany] wrangled'. In Kalckstein's opinion (*ibid*., p. 64) the victory of the Bretons at Questembert (which he too dates wrongly to 888, and if it even happened at all) had 'evidently aggravated or complicated the success of the recent Scandinavian aggressors in the north-east [meaning on the Seine etc.]', and that King Odo may have steered (*gelenkt*) these Northmen against Brittany in the hope that the desperate situation of the Bretons due to their foreign enemies (*auswärtige Feinde*) might be used to accomplish a reestablishment of West Frankish hegemony or even just to recapture lost regions: 'Diese Siege [at Questembert] erschwerten natürlich den Erfolg der neuen normannischen Angreifer im Nordosten. Odo mochte sie in der Hoffnung gegen die Bretagne gelenkt haben, Judikaels Tod und die Bedrängniss der Bretonen durch auswärtige Feinde zur Erneuerung der westfränkischen Hoheit oder doch zum Wiedergewinn verlorener Gebiete auszunutzen.' It should be noted here that Kalckstein also believed that it was Judicaël's successor 'Berengar' who was responsible for making the Northmen from the Seine withdraw back to the Seine (*ibid*., p. 64): 'Judikaels Nachfolger Berengar von Rennes trat ihnen [the Northmen] am Couesnon, dem Grenzfluss der eigentlichen Bretagne, entgegen und zwang sie zum Rückzug.' To this he adds that, in 890 supposedly, 'Alan vernichtete eine andere Schaar im Gau von Nantes unweit der Loire fast gänzlich', 'Alan almost completely destroyed another band in the county of Nantes not far from the Loire'. Regarding this early count Béranger/Bérenger compare in the first instance A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 394-95, and P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 129.

[2] B. Yeurc'h, 'Le Vannetais du IXe au XIe siècle', p. 11, after rather blithely following Guillotel in rejecting any battle at Questembert in 888, does however accept Regino's report of the Northmen's incursion into Brittany and their reaching the Blavet, which he places in 889: 'À la suite de Guillotel, nous ne retenons pas la prétendue victoire de Questembert sur les scandinaves en 888 introduite par la Borderie. En 889, le territoire allant jusqu'au Blavet fut mis à sac par les scandinaves.' He does not address the question of from where these Northmen may have originated - that is from the Seine or the Loire - but implicitly he must have meant the latter because by dating this invasion to 889 this would exclude them being the Seine Northmen because these came to Saint-Lô in late 889 and they were involved in the siege of this town over the following winter.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 357.

and it seems quite likely that he had earlier commanded the Loire Northmen, and also commanded them in 886 to 890, and now as a consequence of the defeat near Nantes [he] left the Loire and sailed to the Somme'.[1]

Hubert Guillotel's very insightful critique and analysis of this whole complex and rather obscure question certainly casts much doubt on the old dating of a battle involving Judicaël and then the supposed victory of Alan at Questembert as proposed for instance by La Borderie and Vogel.[2] However in my opinion the main problem with Guillotel's analysis is that by reducing any and all of the Northmen's activities in Brittany to the single year of 890, and by suggesting these Northmen came from the Seine, it completely effaces and erases Alsting/Hasting and his 'Loire' Northmen from history over the whole period of 882 to 890.[3]

Concluding remarks

This whole Brittany dossier, if we may call it this, remains highly controversial to this day. But in summary, as we have seen the whole nexus regarding a return to the Loire of Alsting's Northmen in about 886, and whether or not they had previously been raiding in northern Brittany, and a possible battle at Questembert in 888, or maybe 889, has as yet, and in fact for hundreds of years, found no consensus at all amongst historians.

In my opinion, and regardless of the precise dates, Alsting's Northmen from the Loire were active in Brittany during the period from 882 to about 890, and it is quite conceivable that they returned to the Loire and Nantes in *c*.886-87. I also tend to agree with Cassard rather than Guillotel that at the end of the 880s to 890 Alan and Judicaël had fought against different groups

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 359, n. 2. This defeat 'near Nantes' was according to Vogel achieved 'im Gau Nantes in unmittelbarer Nähe der Loire', 'in the district of Nantes in the immediate vicinity of the Loire', by Alan I over the remaining group of the Northmen from Questembert (*unter Hasting?*) who had first gone 'south' but who had then returned to the Loire, and had been forced by this defeat to leave the Loire (*ibid*., p. 359). Here Vogel references P. Le Baud (*Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 127), but he adds (*ibid*., p. 359, n. 2) that these 'Loire Northmen' had possibly received new reinforcements or, alternatively, that the losses at Questembert had been exaggerated.

[2] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 362-67. In particular Guillotel demonstrates that Judicaël cannot have died in a battle in 888 because he was still alive in 889.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 367, after saying that 'Il apparaît clairement que l'armée danoise était venue tâter la force de résistance des Bretons', by which Guillotel is referring to the 'army' from the Seine, he then continues with an unstated and very lurking assumption regarding Regino's text by saying, 'La bataille engagée par Judicaël semble avoir été éclipsée par celle que mena Alain le Grand selon toute vraisemblance du côté de la limite est du royaume breton vers le début de l'année' [890]. Guillotel then goes on to refer to a charter of King Odo dated 30 January 890, granted at the domain of *Lenegia*, which he says R.-H. Bautier proposes to identify with Ernée (dep. Mayenne, arr. Mayenne) which is situated on the frontier of the Breton kingdom. He then speculates that the king, Odo, had come towards Brittany and that it is very possible that there had been a meeting 'en marche' between him and Alan the Great comparable to that held at Entrammes between Charles the Bald and Salomon of Brittany in about March of 863. This really is the only evidence/conjecture that Guillotel presents to support his idea that the battles fought by Judicaël and Alan took place in early 890 and that, therefore, they were fought against the Northmen who had come to Saint-Lô from the Seine.

of Northmen, Alan against those coming from the Loire, and Judicaël against those from the Seine.

Furthermore, I would just say this: if the Alsting who seemingly left the Loire in 882 and the Alsting who suddenly appears in the records again in 890 on the Somme were one and the same person, which I and most historians think they were, and if the Alsting of 882 should perhaps not be equated with his possible namesake Hals present at the siege of Asselt in July 882, then Alsting must still have been operating somewhere during this whole eight-year period. Whatever our opinion may be regarding the relevant part of the *Chronicle of Nantes* (chap. 21) and Regino of Prüm's *Chronicon*, I can see no possible alternative to the idea that Brittany, including if perhaps only briefly Breton Nantes in *c*.886-87, was in fact the area of operations of Alsting and/or his 'accomplices' during these years. If not, then where had Alsting been during all these years?

In summary, while secure sources are lacking, after Alsting's Northmen left the middle reaches of the Loire in 882, it does seem that they shifted their operations to coastal Brittany. They probably also established one or more bases along the coasts in which to winter in security. It is also quite possible that in *c*.886-87 they returned to Nantes and the lower Loire causing Bishop Landran to flee. Whether there were fights with the Northmen of Alan before 890, and whether one took place at Questembert or not, cannot be securely established, however what little evidence we have does point in this direction.

But what became of these previously Loire-based Northmen after, say, 889? We do not know. Maybe they accompanied those Seine-based Northmen who came to Saint-Lô in late 889 and besieged the town over the winter before suffering defeat at the hands of the Bretons and retreating to the Seine. This seems most plausible because Alsting's force, last heard of on the Loire in 882, next appears in the record in 890 at Argœuves on the Somme just north of Amiens whilst that part of the Great Army that had returned from Saint-Lô had sailed up the Seine to the Oise and finally arrived at Noyen (dep. Oise) southeast of Amiens to winter there.[1] But that is a whole other story.

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[1] *AV* 890: ed. von Simson, pp. 68-69; trans. Coupland. N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 36/354, suggests: 'Over 889-90 the Seine Vikings moved into Brittany, hard on the heels of the Loire fleet that Alain had successfully driven out (this latter force had broken up into several small flotillas and sailed west). Alain again joined forces with Bérengar of Rennes and led two Breton armies into the field. Finding their retreat down the Marne blocked, the Vikings hauled their ships overland to the Vire and besieged Saint-Lô, where the Bretons virtually annihilated the fleet [...]. A second force was also defeated on the river Couesnon. Alain won two more victories against the Seine Vikings the following year (*Regino* 891), which consolidated his hard-won peace.' Leaving aside the fact that Regino's comments *s.a.* 891 clearly refer to events in 890 (which he had previously described), and that the 'Vikings' had not hauled their ships overland all the way from the Marne to the Vire (for which see Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, *s.a.* 890: trans. MacLean, p. 208, and MacLean's comment, *ibid*., n. 391), I can find no evidence

Finally, in regard to the historical Alsting/Hasting, some historians - I note in particular Pierre Bouet and Alban Gautier - have suggested that there may have been several or even just two 'Hastings'.[1] In essence this idea is proposed because of, in my view, too much faith being placed in Dudo of Saint-Quentin' story of *Alstignus* leading a expedition to the Mediterranean in (implicity) 858/59-861; and even being present in France well before this.[2] But as has been mentioned earlier in this work, Dudo's character *Alstignus* (a name he clearly took from the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*) is a composite creation bringing together various attested raids by disparate groups of Northmen and their leaders (some named, some not) at different times into a conglomerate picture of an evil viking chieftain before Rollo comes on the scene.[3] If Dudo's tale is to be believed (which it is not), the idea is that it would have been impossible for a single chieftain called Alsting/Hasting to have led a significant Scandinavian fleet and army between

for the statement that the (previously?) Loire-based Northmen 'had broken up into several small flotillas and sailed west'; and where does 'west' mean?

[1] P. Bouet, 'Hasting, le Viking pervers selon Dudon de Saint-Quentin', *Annales de Normandie*, 62. 2 (2012), pp. 213-33, at pp. 216-17: 'Les sources franques attestent bien la présence d'un certain Hasting parmi les pillards nordiques, de 841 [why 841?] à 895. Il est évident que Hasting ne peut avoir participé à des expéditions pendant près de 60 ans ! […] rien ne s'oppose à ce que deux (voire plus de deux) chefs nordiques aient porté le nom de Hallstein ou Hastein. […] Comme le nom d'Hasting / *Alstignus* apparaissait dans les sources relatant les expéditions vikings de 841 à 892, il [Dudo] a préféré retenir le nom correspondant à plusieurs chefs scandinaves, qui jouèrent à chaque fois un rôle plus ou moins important, plutôt que ceux de grands chefs prestigieux, comme Oscar, Siegfried, Bjoern, Ragnar, Hundee, qui eurent leur heure de gloire, mais trop éphémère.'; A. Gautier, 'Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs?', p. 32: 'If we follow Dudo, Hasting's career seems to have been a very long one: beginning in the mid-830s, he roamed over the whole of western Europe until he died in England in the mid-890s. This would mean that he died at the age of 80 (at the very least), still leading an army. Of course, it is not strictly impossible, but it is rather unlikely. Could there be in fact several Hastings (even only two, for example a father and a son)? Who knows? But this case shows that we should not trust Dudo or any other late author blindly: Janet Nelson, for one, is very prudent, and she limits what we know of his career to little more than the one last decade (that is, afer 880). Now if we consider only his moves in that shorter period, we see that Hasting operated in three successive regions: on the Loire before 882; between Seine and Scheldt until 892; and, finally, in south-eastern England, where he died in or shortly after 893. It means that Hasting, who had appeared north of the Seine in 882 after some previous activity further south, was probably not among the vikings who had come over from England after Alfred and Guthrum had reached an agreement four years before, particularly if he was the son or a kinsman of an earlier Hasting, who had been raiding on the Loire in the 850s and 860s. If it was indeed the case (which I think likely), the « younger Hasting » of the years 880-893 was actually not « from Denmark », and not even « from Scandinavia »: he was probably born in Frankia, and had lived all of his life there.' In the French version of this article (written later but published before the English one), Gautier says not that Hasting had been 'born in Frankia' but that (p. 79), 'le « jeune Hasting » des années 880-893 n'était donc pas originaire « du Danemark », ni même « de Scandinavie » : il était probablement *né en Aquitaine* [my emphasis], et il y avait passé toute sa vie jusqu'à l'année 882': A. Gautier, 'Nature et mode d'action des bandes armées vikings: quelques réflexions sur la seconde moitié du IXe siècle', p .79. Why the sudden change from Frankia to Aquitaine? In recent communication Gautier says: 'As for the Aquitaine/Frankia variation, I believe I realised, when I was writing the French version (which was published earlier but written later) that I might be more precise.'

[2] P. Bouet (*ibid.*) (following Prentout), even believes in the relevance here of some 'Hasteins' found in late Icelandic sagas, an issue I will not explore here.

[3] In P. Bauduin's words (pers. comm.): 'Dudon réunit dans sa biographie de Hasting les éléments destinés à faire le portrait d'un viking barbare: il s'agit en fait de réunir sur cette figure de Hasting un ensemble de clichés pour en faire un archétype du païen féroce et destructeur.'

the 850s (or even earlier) and about 893 when we last hear of 'this' *Hæsten* in England - a period of forty or even fifty years![1]

Another slightly different view was proposed by Jean Renaud who suggested the name *Hasting* was a legendary and culturally inherited one heard of in France from Scandinavian mouths and applied to a series of anonymous vikings. Thus, Hasting is a legendary person to whom have been attributed a series of expeditions in France and along the coasts of the Mediterranean.[2]

In different ways both of these views or conjectures are only really necessary because of a lingering belief in Dudo of Saint-Quentin's stories of *Alstignus*. Once we discard these, as we most surely should, then, chronologically, there is no need for them. I mean by this that if we reject Dudo then chronologically there should be no objection to the idea that Hasting arrived on the Loire (from the Seine?) in about 866. That is that one single chieftain could have been responsible for all these activities until the early 890s in England, because one man could certainly have done all this. A chieftain found in the second half of the 860s on the Loire could well have been the same person on the Somme after 890 and in England a little thereafter.[3]

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[1] See the quotes in the note above.

[2] J. Renaud, 'Hasting en Méditerranée : de l'histoire à la légende', *Les Temps médiévaux*, 15 (Nice, 2004), pp. 32-41.

[3] J. L. Nelson, 'England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: II, the Vikings and Others', p. 25, n. 106: 'Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, 867 (*recte* 866), p. 92, mentions 'Hastingus' as 'commander of Northmen' active on the Loire in 867 (*recte 8*66) and 874 (*recte* 868) [or 869?]. If this is the same Hastein (and not a kinsman), his uniquely well-documented career spanned three decades.' Regarding Hasting, Nelson's views expressed in this article are copied into her 'Hæsten [Hásteinn, Hasting] (*fl.* 882–893)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2014). If one wants to explore the idea of two Hastings or Hasteins more I suggest one should should examine once again the *Hals* at Asselt in 882 as discussed earlier.

Chapter 11

THE TURN OF THE CENTURY: CROSS-CHANNEL AND OTHER CONNECTIONS, 896-*c*.914

The period between 896 and 913/14 is one of the most tricky and somewhat obscure spans of time we have to address in our whole study of the Scandinavians' activities in France in general, and specifically in Aquitaine. Nevertheless, this period, despite some of the many uncertainties, is one which illustrates as well as any other the very close relationship and connections between Northmen operating in France and those operating in the British Isles, including Ireland.

In the autumn of 892 a good part of the very conglomerate and so-called Great Army which had been plaguing northern France and the Low Countries for the last thirteen years departed for England. After many adventures there some of them returned to France. These Northmen who seem to have initially included the 'Alsting/Hasting' who was discussed in earlier chapters - or at least on the outward journey - are yet another example of how the Northmen constantly moved from place to place, usually and inevitably 'over the sea', here between France and England.

This is a well-known phenomenon. As Neil Price puts it: 'As their military fortunes waxed and waned, the Scandinavian armies would move back and forth across the Channel with some regularity [...] appearing under different names and in different constellations in different places.'[1] Regarding England, Simon Keynes says: 'The question always arises whether a particular raid recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* originated in Scandinavia, or whether it originated among the Vikings established on the Continent or among those based in Ireland; for one has to bear in mind that the activities of the Vikings in Ireland, in England, and on the Continent, were complementary aspects of a single phenomenon, and that one raid might have been part of a larger pattern.' Keynes then adds: 'It follows that we cannot begin to understand the course and the conduct of the raids in England without continual reference to continental and Irish annals (notably the so-called *Annals of St-Bertin*, the *Annals of St-Vaast* and the *Annals of Ulster*).'[2] According to Simon Coupland: 'Viking armies were continually changing

[1] N. S. Price, 'Pirates of the North Sea? The Viking Ship as Political Space', in L. Melheim, H. Glørstad, and Z. Tsigaridas Glørstad (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Past Colonisation, Maritime Interaction and Cultural Integration* (Sheffield, 2016), pp. 149-76, at p. 163.
[2] S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England, c. 790-1016', p. 51.

in their composition, leadership and location. New elements arrived as old elements left, and the theatre of operations could change from year to year.'[1] Lucien Musset once wrote: 'On entrevoit la nécessité de mener la recherche en confrontant sans cesse faits anglais et faits normands.'[2] One could add many more such pertinent observations, although it has to be said that in general these historians, and others, rarely went on to do what they proposed was necessary.[3] But in terms of the movement to England in 892 and back to France in 896, whilst this is a fascinating subject in itself,[4] particularly because, and regarding Aquitaine, Alsting/Hasting or the Hæsten of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* had earlier been operating on the Loire and in Brittany, this chapter will concentrate on some other connections.

In particular we will look at the connections between the attack on Tours on the Loire in 903 and that on the important Breton monastery at Landévennec in 913. Not only do these two attacks seem to be connected but they were also, as will be shown, connected with Scandinavian-related events in the British Isles - in England, Wales and Ireland. Regarding Tours, we will assess what we know of the attack on Tours from a Latin text from the first half of the tenth century added to the opening page of a ninth-century manuscript of Hrabanus Maurus's commentary on Saint Matthew. As well as much else this text contains the names of the two leaders who led the attack: Baret and Heric (ON Bárðr and Eiríkr/Hárekr). By considering these names in the context of the activities of the Northmen immediately before and in the years after the attack it will be argued that at least part of this fleet had come from Ireland after the Scandinavians' expulsion from Dublin in 902 and that later they returned to Ireland in 914 after raiding in Brittany, England and Wales. Additionally, and importantly, it will also be suggested that there may well be a connection between the attack on Tours and the famous 'viking' silver hoard buried at Cuerdale on the river Ribble in Lancashire in *c.*905-910.

Regarding the attack on the monastery at Landévennec in 913 the historian of Brittany Joëlle Quaghebeur says about this, 'Les déplacements successifs de la flotte d'*Óttar* et de *Hróaldr* (Bretagne, Pays de Galles, Irlande) laissent entrevoir que ces confins maritimes et les mers bordant étaient alors devenus une *Mare Normannorum*'.[5]

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[1] S. Coupland, 'The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911', p. 195.
[2] L. Musset, 'Pour l'étude comparative de deux fondations politiques des Vikings : le royaume d'York et le duché de Rouen', p. 53.
[3] The exception to this is perhaps Lucien Musset but his concentration was the tenth century.
[4] From a 'Frankish' point of view in my opinion the best overview still remains W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 370-82. Regarding the period in England between 892 and 896, there are many classic and more modern studies of this. The best summary to my mind is A. P. Smyth, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 117-46.
[5] J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', p. 126.

This chapter will also explore what those Northmen who returned to France in 896 did in the years immediately afterwards. Of most interest for our purposes is that they overwintered in Aquitaine in 897-898 making attacks before returning to the Seine region and undertaking more raids there, probably including a raid up the Canche in 898. The raids along the Loire over the winter of 897-898 could well have been where and when at least some of the about 900 West Frankish Cuerdale coins were collected and the Northmen's subsequent activities back in the North must have been the time when another large group of about 100 Carolingian coins in the Cuerdale hoard which can only have been gathered in the Low Countries were obtained.

Finally, this analysis will be followed by an exploration of the information contained in a second very different source: three works of Bishop Radbod of Utrecht concerning the attack on Tours, written in Frisia[1] in the years just after the attack itself. Where Radbod might have got his information about events in faraway Tours will also be discussed. This is followed by an exploration of what the ethnic terms Radbod uses to describe the Scandinavians involved might actually mean - terms such as 'Danes and Swedes', 'Swedes' and even 'Francia, calling them Danes, names them with their fatherly name as Swedes'. Does Radbod's use of these labels provide any meaningful information regarding the ethnicity or identity of those involved, or is it rather just an example of a 'distorting Frankish discourse' used for Scandinavian raiders in the ninth and tenth centuries, and thus has nothing useful to tell us about the origin or identity of the Northmen who had attacked Tours? Lastly, we will look briefly at the question of whether Radbod's 'Danes and Swedes' might conceivably be in any way connected to the so-called Swedish dynasty in Denmark, certainly raiding in Frisia (including Utrecht) in the early tenth century when Radbod had actually encountered and been threatened by some of them.

The attack on Tours in 903

In late June 903 a Scandinavian force attacked the walled town of Tours on the river Loire. It was repulsed but only after it had caused much damage and death in the town and in surrounding areas. From an early tenth-century text we know the precise date of the attack, the names of the Scandinavian leaders responsible for the attack, as well as the fact that many other churches in the area were attacked. The text reads:

[1] Probably at Deventer in the present-day Netherlands.

> Anno incarnationis dominicae D CCCC III, II kalendas Julii, missa videlicet Sancti Pauli apostoli, regnante Karolo filio Hludovici Balbi, post obitum domni Odonis regis in anno VI, et Rotberti abbatis anno XV, iterum succensa est venerabilis basilica Sancti Martini Turonis cum XXVIII aliis ecclesiis ab Heric et Baret Nortmannis cum toto castello et burgis.[1]

> In the year of the incarnation of the Lord 903, the second day of the Kalends of July, on the feast day of the apostle Saint Paul, under the reign of Charles, son of Louis the Stammerer, the sixth year after the death of king Odo, and in the fifteenth year of abbot Robert, the venerable basilica of Saint Martin of Tours, and twenty-eight other churches, was burned by the Northmen Heric and Baret with all the fortified town and suburbs.[2]

It is noticeable that the date of the attack is given very precisely as the second day of the kalends of July - that is 30 June 903. As the text says, this was in the reign of Louis the Stammerer's son Charles the Simple who held the West Frankish throne from 898 until 922, and indeed in the sixth year following the death of King Odo on 1 January 898, as well as in the fifteenth year of Robert's time as lay abbot of St Martin of Tours - Robert had succeeded his brother Odo as lay abbot in 888 when Odo became king.[3]

This text has been added at the bottom of the first page of a manuscript held in the library of Saint-Martin at Tours dating from the first half of the tenth century which contains a commentary on Saint Matthew by Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856). Hrabanus had studied under Alcuin at Tours before returning to the abbey of Fulda in 803. In fact, Alcuin had given Hrabanus his name *Maurus* after the favourite disciple of Benedict, Saint Maurus. Hrabanus became abbot of Fulda in 822 and then in 847 the archbishop of Mainz. Hrabanus wrote his commentary on Saint Matthew before 826 and dedicated it to the then archbishop of Mainz

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[1] See *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon (Tours, 1854), pp. 107-8, n. 4; *Le Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, vol. 37. 1, pp. 68-69. This text was copied almost, but not quite, *verbatim* by the early twelfth-century Tours compiler 'Petri, fils de Béchin' (sometimes simply called 'Pierre Béchin'). Pierre Béchin was a canon at Tours and wrote the first of the so-called 'Chronicles of Tours', called *Chronicon Petri Filii Bechini*, in about 1138-1154. See *Chronicon Petri Fili Bechini*, in *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, pp. 45-46. As elsewhere Pierre Béchin derived this information from some earlier source, here more than likely from the probably tenth-century text quoted above. As will be discussed later, also regarding the attack on Tours in 903, he also copied almost word for word from Radbod of Utrecht's early tenth-century *Miracle of Saint Martin*.

[2] My translation. The basilica/church and its *bourg* were situated 1km west of the *cité* (*castello*) and were without defences. The old Gallo-Roman walls of the *cité* had been repaired in the 870s after earlier attacks; see *AB* 869: ed. Grat, pp. 163-64; H. Noizet, 'Les chanoines de Saint-Martin de Tours', p. 55; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 230.

[3] See P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin', p. 66. Robert briefly became king of West Francia from 922 to 923.

Haistulph.[1] The text has been dated to the first half (or perhaps the first years) of the tenth century following the attack on Tours.[2]

Before their retreat the Northmen had clearly burned the basilica of Saint-Martin and the clergy and people of Tours had fled to the safety of the walled town, as Bishop Radbod's *Miracle of Saint Martin* says.[3] That the church and *castrum* were burned and partly destroyed is also confirmed by a sermon titled *De Combustione Basilicae Beati Martini* given shortly after the siege by the former canon of Tours Odo of Cluny.[4]

Some of the information contained in the text added, as mentioned, at the bottom of the first page of a manuscript held in the library of Saint-Martin of Tours which contains a commentary on Saint Matthew by Hrabanus Maurus was copied in later years, mostly in the twelfth century,[5] in Tours, Angers, Amboise, Vendôme, Saumur and Poitiers. Mostly these annals and chronicles mention the date of the attack, that the church of Saint-Martin and the defensive walls of Tours were burned, along with twenty-eight other churches,[6] while some mention Heric and Baret as well, with slightly different spellings.[7] Some of the 'other churches' burned were in and around Tours. They seem to have included (to use the modern names) Meigné-le-Vicomte, Saint-Barthelemy, Le Moutier, and Chaussay in Fondettes; but the Northmen also reached Baucay,

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[1] It was probably originally written between 822, when Hrabanus became the abbot of Fulda, and 826 when Haistulph died; a dating proposed, among others, by J.-P. Migne, see *PL*, 107, pp. 727-28.

[2] Manuscript no. 106 of the library of Tours. For its dating to the tenth century see E. K. Rand, *Studies in the script of Tours*, *A Survey of the Manuscripts of Tours*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1929), plate CXLIII; *Le Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, vol. 37. 1 (Paris, 1900), pp. 68-69; A. Salmon, ed., *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, pp. 107-8, n. 4; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin', p. 62; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 389 and n. 3.

[3] Radbod's works will be discussed in detail later.

[4] See *PL*, 133, ed. J.-P. Migne, cols. 729-49. For its attribution to Odo of Cluny see S. Farmer, *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (Ithaca, New York, London, 1991), pp. 31-35. See also H. Noizet, 'Les chanoines de Saint-Martin de Tours et les Vikings', p. 55. There is also much other contemporary charter evidence that the church and town walls were burned.

[5] Of course, starting with the *Chronicon Petri Filii Bechini* as discussed in a note above. These other later annals could well have borrowed from this chronicle and not from the original tenth-century text from where Pierre Béchin almost certainly got his information.

[6] For where this information regarding twenty-eight churches being burned may originally have been derived see below.

[7] These later annals and chronicles telling of the attack on Tours include: the *Liber de commendatione Turonicae provinciae*, where the Northmen's leaders are called 'Berit et Harec'; the later *Chronicon Turonense Magnum* ('Heric et Haret') (See *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, pp. 300 and 107); the *Liber de Compositione castri Ambaziae* ('Erich et Barhet') (See *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin (Paris, 1913), p. 23); the *Annales Vindocinenses*; the *Annales qui dicuntur Rainaldi Archidiaconi Sancti Mauricii Andregavensis*; the *Obituario Sancti Sergii Andregavensis*; the *Annales Sancti Florentii Salmurensis* (See *Recueil d'annales angevines et vendomoises*, ed. L. Halphen, at pp. 55-56, 84, 106, 115); and the *Chronicon Sancti Maxentii Pictavensis* (See *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, p. 373).

southeast of Saumur and west of Tours, la Calourie in Vouray, east of Tours, and Montreuil-en-Touraine, east of Tours and north of Amboise.[1]

In summary, we know when the attack on Tours took place and some of the other places in the vicinity which were also plundered. But what is of most interest is that the early tenth-century note says that 'Heric and Baret' were the leaders of the 'Northmen' who conducted these attacks. Who were they and where had they come from?

The attack on Tours in 903 has often been linked with the expulsion of the Northmen of Dublin in 902.[2] Some of the Dublin exiles of 902 went to Scotland and possibly the Isle of Man; others to Cumbria, Lancashire and (via Anglesey) to the Wirral. But some may well have gone to the Loire in France. David C. Douglas wrote: 'During the first decade of the tenth century the Norse power in Ireland was beginning to wane, and many Viking chiefs, such as Bard and Erik who sacked Tours in 903, made their way from Ireland to France about this time;'[3] Walther Vogel said: 'Wahrscheinlich war diese Flotte eine norwegische und kam von Irland; dort hatte in Jahre vorher eine allgemeine Erhebung der Iren die Insel völlig von der Norwegern befreit',[4] 'This fleet was probably a Norwegian one and came from Ireland; in the year before there had been a general uprising of the Irish which had completely liberated the island from the Northmen'.[5] T. D. Kendrick thought that after the expulsion from Dublin 'the beaten remnant of the defeated [Scandinavian] army' sought 'refuge across the seas, some going off to plunder Chester and others sailing for the Loire'.[6] Clare Downham says: 'The Vikings who were expelled from Ireland divided into various groups. Some may have travelled to France.'[7] This

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[1] For which see P. Lévêque, 'Trois actes faux ou interpolés des comtes Eudes et Robert et du Roi Raoul en faveur de l'abbaye de Marmoutier (887, 912, 931)', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 64 (Paris, 1903), pp. 54-82, 289-305, at pp. 292-95; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 390, n. 1. H. Noizet, 'Les chanoines de Saint-Martin de Tours et les Vikings', pp. 55-56, thinks the supposed number of churches burned was a deliberate exaggeration, which is certainly possible, but Noizet does rather muddle up a number of things (at p. 55 and n. 8) regarding the attacks on Tours in 853 and 903. Briefly she has the number of churches supposedly burned in 903 being 22 when it was 28, and for 853 she has the number of churches burned being 28 whereas the number of churches which burned was 22 and her reference for this (the *Chronicon Petri Filii Bechini*) is explicitly dated to 997 and has nothing (explicitly) to do with the Northmen and certainly not with the attack of 853.

[2] *AU* 902.2: 'The heathens were driven from Ireland, that is from the fortress of Áth Cliath, by Mael Finnia son of Flannacán with the men of Brega and by Cerball son of Muiricán, with the Laigin; and they abandoned a good number of their ships, and escaped half dead after they had been wounded and broken.'

[3] D. C. Douglas, 'Rollo of Normandy', *English Historical Review*, 57 (1942), pp. 417-36; reprinted in *Time and the Hour* (London, 1977), pp. 121-40, at p. 126.

[4] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 390. In Vogel's time, and often still, the Scandinavians in Ireland were almost always called 'Norwegians', whether they were geographically, ethnically, or not. H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, p. 124 and n. 4, follows Vogel in saying that the army of 'Barit (Bárd) and Heric (Eirik)' who ravaged 'the neighbourhood of Tours' in 903, 'but only by the way, it seems' (whatever that means), 'may very well have been a part of the Norwegians driven out of Dublin when the town was captured by the Irish in 901 [=902]'.

[5] My translation.

[6] T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings*, p. 282.

[7] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 27.

is an opinion also proposed by Lucien Musset, Allen Mawer, Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin[1] and others.[2]

Baret is an early Frankish Latin rendition of the later Old Norse name *Bárðr*. It is a name that we find repeatedly in the ninth and tenth centuries in Ireland and in Irish-connected events in England. Besides 903 at Tours, and one other interesting exception, the name is found, as far as I can tell, nowhere else.[3] The notable exception is also on the Loire and might have been connected with Ireland. As was discussed at length in Chapter 6, in 865 the monastery of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire at Fleury near Orléans was attacked and burned for the first time. Shortly after the event Adrevald, a contemporary monk of Fleury, reported this attack in detail in his *Miracula sancti Benedicti* (*Miracles of Saint Benedict*). Adrevald says the Northmen came with forty ships (*cum quadraginta navibus*) and that their leader was called *duce Bareto* (that is *dux Baretus*). This is about as reliable evidence as we ever get at this time.[4] In the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* Prudentius of Troyes also tells of this raid up the Loire and says that on their way back from attacking and burning the monastery of Fleury they burned the *civitas* of Orléans and the monasteries and churches around the town, before sailing back down the river to their base. As explored in Chapter 6 it is possible, although it cannot be proved, that this *Baretus* might be linked to another chieftain of the same name in Ireland. The so-called *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* report that in 867 'Earl (*iarla*) Bárith and Háimar, two men of a noble family of *Lochlannach*', were fighting in Connacht and that in an ambush Háimar was killed, but that although he was wounded Bárith survived.[5]

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[1] L. Musset, 'Participation de vikings venus des pays celtes à la colonisation scandinave de la Normandie', *Cahiers du centre de recherche sur les pays du Nord et du Nord-Ouest* (Caen, 1978), pp. 107-117, reprinted in *Nordica et Normannica* (1997), pp. 279–96; A. Mac Shamhrain, *The Vikings: an Illustrated History* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 75-79; J.-M. Picard, 'Early contacts between Ireland and Normandy: the cult of Irish saints in Normandy before the conquest', in M. Richter and J.-M. Picard (eds.), *Ogma: essays in Celtic studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Chatháin* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 85–93, at p. 92; A. Mawer, *The Vikings* (Cambridge, 1913), p. 51. A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, p. 131, says just: 'The heathen refugees from Ireland seem to have settled along the eastern shores of the Irish sea'; hence in Lancashire and Cumbria.

[2] For example, G. Storm, *Kritiske Bidrag til Vikingetidens Historie: (I. Ragnar Lodbrok og Gange-Rolf)* (Kristiania, 1878), p. 136; A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple* (Paris, 1889), pp. 67-69, p. 126.

[3] This is true for the ninth and tenth centuries, but there is one other earlier case. In the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* William of Jumièges when discussing the early origin of the 'Goths' says that with their king called *Berith* they eventually settled in 'Dacia, also called Denmark' (William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, I, 3-4, pp. 14-15). This is taken from Jordanes' *Getica*, where he is called *Berig*; see *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, trans. C. C. Mierow (Princeton, 1925), p. 57.

[4] Adrevald of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 1, chap. 34, p. 75.

[5] *FAI* §350: ed. and trans. Radner, pp. 128-29.

Landévennec in Brittany, and England, Wales and Ireland

To return to France, in 913 ten years after the attack on Tours a fleet of Northmen attacked and burned the important Breton monastery of Landévennec. In one of the monastery's *computes* we find a note in the margin next to the year 913 which reads: 'In this year the monastery of Saint Guénolé was destroyed by the Northmen', *Eo[dem] anno destr[uctum est] monasterium s[an]cti [winwa]loei a normannis*.[1] Northmen had been raiding and occasionally settling for a time along the coasts of Neustria, Brittany and Aquitaine throughout the previous century. But in the late ninth century Alan the Great, the duke of Brittany, had inflicted several reverses on the Northmen, after which as de La Borderie put it, 'the Northmen had not even dared to look towards Brittany from afar'.[2] But following Alan's death in 907,[3] factional strife broke out and Brittany was weakened. The Northmen then 'stirred themselves again and in front of their face the ground trembled'.[4] In the *Chronicle of Nantes* we read that during the episcopate of Bishop Adelard (that is after 912) the rage of the Northmen began to re-erupt as never before.[5] It is in this context that we should see this raid on Brittany.

Probably after wintering somewhere in Brittany the fleet that had destroyed Saint Guénolé's monastery at Landévennec moved on to the Severn Estuary in England. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says 'a great raiding ship-army' came from the south from *Lydwiccum*, that is from Brittany. Two of its leaders were jarls Ohtor/Ohter and Hraold/Hroald (ON Óttar and Haraldr).[6] They 'raided in Wales everywhere by sea, where it suited them, and took Cameleac, bishop in Archenfield,[7] and led him with them to the ships'. King Edward the Elder ransomed the bishop back for forty pounds. The 'whole raiding-army' then wanted to raid in the Archenfield but were met and defeated by the English levies of Hereford and Gloucester. Haraldr was killed, as

[1] See J.-L. Deuffic, 'Les manuscrits de Landévennec', in M. Simon (ed.), *L'abbaye de Landévennec de saint Guénolé à nos jours* (Rennes, 1985), pp. 259-79, at pp. 272-74. For the attack on the monastery of Landévennec see also J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 83-86; A. Bardel and R. Perennec, 'Les Vikings à Landévennec', *Les Vikings en France, Dossiers d'Archéologie*, 277 (2002), pp. 50-59; A. Bardel, 'L'abbaye Saint-Guénolé de Landévennec', *Archéologie médiévale*, 21 (1991), pp. 51-101; *idem*, *Fouille et rapport, Landévennec* (Université de Haute Bretagne, 1985); J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et la Bretagne', pp. 118, 126-28; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 374-76.

[2] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, p. 81; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagn*e, vol. 2, p. 349; J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et la Bretagne', pp. 117-18.

[3] B. Bischoff, *Anecdota novissima, Texte des vierten bis sechzehnten jahrhunderts, Quellen und untersuchungen zur lateinischen philologie des Mittelalters*, vol. 7 (Stuttgart, 1984), XIII, pp. 103-5, at p. 105.

[4] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, p. 81; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagn*e, vol. 2, p. 349.

[5] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, p. 80: 'Postea vero ordinates est Adalardus, cujus temporibus coepit ebullire rables Normannorum.'

[6] *ASC*, MSS B, C, D give *Hraold*, MS A gives *Hroald*.

[7] The Archenfield lies between the River Monnow and the River Wye in southern and western Herefordshire.

(possibly) was a brother of Óttar, plus 'a great part of the raiding-army'.[1] The Northmen were then driven into an enclosure and besieged by the English until they gave hostages so 'that they would leave King Edward's domain'. Edward then put in place coastal defences from Cornwall to Avonmouth to prevent the Northmen coming ashore. Yet in spite of these defences, and abandoning the hostages they had given to their fate, the Northmen tried on two occasions to land but were repulsed by the English. On the second landing 'they were hit, so that few came away, except only those who swam out to their ships'. They found refuge on a small island in the Severn Estuary (either Flatholme or Steepholme);[2] but they started to starve and so 'they went from there to Dyfed and then out to Ireland'. This was, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says, 'in harvest-time'.[3]

In the same year the *Annals of Ulster* report 'A naval battle at Manu [Isle of Man] between Bárid son of Oitir and Ragnall grandson of Ímar, in which Bárid and almost all his army were destroyed', 'Bellum nauale oc Manainn eter Bárid m. n-Oitir & Ragnall h. Imair ubi Bare pene cum omni exercitu suo deletus est'.[4] Could this 'Bárid the son of Oitir' be the same man as the Baret who attacked Tours in 903? And possibly the son of the Ohtor/Óttar who had come to England from Brittany?[5]

This is all quite possible and the chronology and possible ages of both men do not preclude it. But if a brother of Ohtor/Óttar really was killed by the English it is also possible that this brother was Baret of Tours.[6] This would make Bárid son of Oitir the nephew of Baret of Tours.

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[1] *ASC* MS A *s.a.* 918 [=914], MS D 915 [=914], ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 98-100. MS A reads 'ofslogon þone eorl Hroald 7 þæs oþres eorles broþor Ohteres'. This is usually translated as 'and killed the jarl Hroald and the other Jarl Ohtor's brother', which is rather obscure. Some take it to mean that as well as Haraldr a brother of Óttar was also killed (see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, 90-91), others that Haraldr was the brother of Óttar (see A. Woolf, 'View from the West: an Irish perspective on West Saxon dynastic practice', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder 899-924* (London, 2001), pp. 89-101, at p. 90; J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et la Bretagne', p. 121). Not generally being keen on unnamed brothers in the *ASC* (see, for example, *ASC s.a.* 878), I tend to prefer the latter interpretation. This would mean that what is being said is that Haraldr was the brother of Óttar, where the 'oþres eorles' refers to earlier in the entry when the two jarls are mentioned: 'Her on þysum geare com micel sciphere hider ofer suþan of Lidwiccum 7 twegen eorlas mid, Ohtor 7 Hroald'; but that there was an unnamed brother is also possible.

[2] MS A has *Bradan Relice*, MSS B, C and D have *Steapan Reolice*

[3] *ASC* 914, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 98-100; MS A gives a date of 918, which is clearly wrong. The other MSS give dates of 914 or 915. *Chronicon Æthelweardi: The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell (London, 1962), p. 51, says *s.a.* 913 [=914]: 'After a year a very large fleet arrived at the shores of the English, in the estuary and the streams of the Severn, but the fighting was not seriously protracted there in that year. Then the major part of that army went to Ireland, formerly called *Britannis* by the great Julius Caesar.' The *Annales Cambriae s.a.* 913 (cf. D. N. Dumville, ed. and trans., *Annales Cambriae, A.D. 682-954: texts A-C in* parallel (Cambridge, 2002)) say just 'Ohter comes *to Britain*'.

[4] *AU* 914.4, pp. 362-63.

[5] For this identification see for example C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 248, 266; H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, p. 124.

[6] Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, chap. 5, §16, pp. 155-56, says that the brother of *Uhter* (that is Ohtor/Óttar) who was killed was called *Geolcil*. Arnold comments (p. 156, n. a): 'This *Geolcil* appears to be a name invented by Henry, and applied to the unnamed brother of Earl Uhter, whom the Chronicles mention as

Alternatively, Bárid son of Oitir and the jarl Ohtor who had returned from Brittany could have been brothers with a father also called Ohtor/Óttar.[1]

We know from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that the Óttar who came from Brittany in 914 moved on to raid in southwest Wales and then proceeded to Ireland, where he and his fleet arrived before 1 November the same year.[2] Under 914 the *Annals of Ulster* report: 'A great new fleet of the heathens on Loch dá Caech'; that is in Waterford harbour.[3] Over the next two years more Northmen arrived in Waterford and ravaged the kingdoms and churches of Munster and Leinster.[4] What seems to have happened is that Óttar's returning forces were joined by others and tried to re-establish themselves in Ireland, but they did not yet feel strong enough, or perhaps did not feel the need, to attack Dublin, held by the Irish since 902. This changed in 917 when 'Ragnall the grandson of Ímar' (ON Rögnvaldr) and his brother or cousin 'Sitriuc grandson of Ímar' (ON Sigtryggr) arrived in south-eastern Ireland.[5] After skirmishing with the Irish and after the battle of Cenn Fúait,[6] Sitriuc managed to capture Dublin.[7] Once the Northmen were back in Dublin Sitriuc was left in charge there. In 918 his brother or cousin Ragnall, together with 'jarl Oitir', decided to leave Waterford and try their luck in Britain,[8] where they fought an indecisive battle with the Scots of Alba and the Northumbrian English on the banks of the river Tyne at Corbridge. During this battle 'jarl Oitir' was killed.[9]

Leaving these Irish matters for the moment, we know of at least one other Northman called 'jarl Ohter' (*Ohter eorl*) who died in England fighting the English in 910 at the battle of

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having fallen on this occasion.' This could be correct. If the garbled name *Geolcil* means anything it could perhaps remind us of the king *Eowils/Ecwils/Eowilisc* who died at the battle of Wednesfield/Tettenhall in Staffordshire in 910 (see *ASC* 911 [=910]).

[1] I suggest this last alternative is less likely given the tendency for viking notables to be named after grandfathers or uncles etc. rather than their fathers.

[2] D. Ó Corráin, 'Ireland, Wales, Man and the Hebrides', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 83-109, at p. 97. A. Woolf, 'View from the West', p. 90, says: 'That this was the same fleet one can be fairly certain since its leaders are named in a later entry (*AU* 918.4) as Oitir and Gragabai, 'Oitir' being the Irish rendering of 'Ohter' (ON Óttar). Gragabai, one must assume, will have been the ill-fated Hroald's successor as leader of his portion of the fleet.' Gragabai is called *Oswl Cracabam* in the *Historia regum* (ed. T. Arnold, p. 93) when he and *Oter* attack "Dunbline"'.

[3] *AU* 914.5, p. 363

[4] *AU* 915.7, pp. 364-65; *AU* 916.6, p. 365; *Chronicon Scotorum s.a.* 914 [=915], p. 159. The early twelfth-century *Cogadh Gaedhel Re Gallaibh: The War of the Gaedhil with The Gaill*. ed. J. H. Todd, Rolls Series (London, 1867), pp. 38-41, says that earl *Oitir Dubh* (Óttar the Black) arrived on Waterford harbour with 100 ships and plundered east and south Munster, and gives a whole list of fleets with their supposed leaders who arrived afterwards, information it is not possible to verify.

[5] Ragnall arrived at Waterford harbour and Sitriuc at Cenn Fúait, see *AU* 917.2.

[6] *AU* 917.3, p. 367. For a thorough analysis of 917, the battle and its location see C. Etchingham, 'The battle of Cenn Fúait, 917: location and military significance', *Peritia*, 21 (2010), pp. 208-32.

[7] *AU* 917.4, p. 367. The *Chronicon Scotorum s.a. 917,* pp. 161-62, says that Dublin was taken by the 'foreigners', 'by force from the men of Ireland'.

[8] *AU* 918.4, p. 369.

[9] *AU* 918.4, p. 369; *FAI*, §459; see also *Historia regum*, ed. T. Arnold, part 1, p. 93; *The Church Historians*, trans. Stevenson, vol. 3, part. 2, p. 68. The *Historia regum* calls him 'Oter comes'.

Tettenhall/Wednesfield in present-day Staffordshire.[1] This Ohter could conceivably have been the father of both the Bárid the son of Oitir, who died fighting Ragnall the grandson of Ímar in 914, and of the jarl Ohter who had returned from Brittany in 914 and died at Corbridge in 918.[2]

Whatever the precise family or other relationships between all these Bárids and Óttars, and even Haralds, I suggest that there can be little doubt that Baret of Tours was one of these Irish-connected Northmen. To repeat a little, no chieftain with the name Bárid/Bárðr, or even with one exception Ohtor/Oitir/Óttar can be found anywhere else except in Ireland or in Irish-connected events in England in the late ninth and early tenth centuries.[3]

As has already been mentioned, some of the Scandinavians in Ireland had been expelled from Dublin in 902. The *Annals of Ulster* say in this year: 'The heathens were driven from Ireland, i.e. from the fortress of Áth Cliath [Dublin], by Mael Finnia son of Flannacán with the men of Brega and by Cerball son of Muiricán, with the Laigin; and they abandoned a good number of their ships, and escaped half dead after they had been wounded and broken.'[4] They only returned to south-eastern Ireland and Dublin in 914-917; and these Northmen included Ohtor from Brittany, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and some Irish annals tell us.

It thus seems most likely that both Baret/Bárðr of Tours and Ohtor/Ohter/Óttar from Brittany were members of the post-902 Hiberno-Norse diaspora from Ireland.[5]

The case of Heric is more problematic. This is an early Frankish rendition of Horik/Horic (ON Eiríkr or Hárekr). It was a name born by two successive kings of the Danes in the ninth century: Horik I, who died in 854 in a civil war at the hands of returning pretenders to his kingdom, and his relative and successor Horik II who disappears from the records sometime after 865, being replaced by 873 by the brothers Hálfdan and Sigfrid.[6] Both of these Horiks

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[1] *ASC* D, *s.a.* 911, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 97. See also *Chronicon Æthelweardi: The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell, pp. 52-53.

[2] The whole nexus of all these Oitirs/Ohtors/Ohters/Óttars is further complicated by a report in the *FAI*, §429, ed. Radner, pp.167-72, which certainly refers to events sometime in the early 900s as it is inserted into the story of Ingimund's coming from Dublin to the Wirral and, later, attacking Chester, things that can be dated to between 903 and 910. The report says that a 'king' called *Oittir mc. Iarngna* (Óttar son of Iarnkné) had been defeated in a battle by the 'men of Alba' and that he was killed 'after' the battle with many of the *Lochlannaig*. This could refer to either the jarl *Ohter* killed at Wednesfield near Tettenhall in Staffordshire in 910 or, less likely, the jarl Oitir killed at the battle of Corbridge in 918. Óttar son of Iarnkné was already active in Ireland in 883; see *AU* 883.2, pp. 336-37; *Chronicum Scotorum s.a.* 883, pp. 168-69. Iarnkné might have been the 'fair foreigner' beheaded by the 'black/dark foreigners' at Carlingford Lough in 852, see *AU* 852.3 p. 311; *Chronicum Scotorum*, *s.a.* 852; *FAI*, §235.

[3] The exception is the Norwegian Ohthere present at the court of Alfred the Great at the end of the ninth century found in the *Old English Orosius,* but this Ohtere was a 'merchant yeoman' and I think he had no relation to all the others bearing the same name being discussed here.

[4] *AU* 902.2, p. 353.

[5] I will touch briefly on what they might have been doing between 903 and 913 later.

[6] For the 'civil war' of 854 see *inter alia* the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and the *Annals of Fulda*. For the brothers Hálfdan and Sigfrid see S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark'.

were repeatedly called Eric or Erik in later Scandinavian sources. But unlike with Bárid/Bárðr there were also numerous chieftains and petty kings in Sweden called Eiríkr in the ninth and tenth centuries, although space does not permit a fuller examination of this issue.[1] It might just be a coincidence but the first mention of anyone bearing the name Eiríkr/Hárekr we find in Ireland or England is in connection with the death of a certain *Arick mac Báirith* (*Arick mcBrith*, Eiríkr/Hárekr son of Báirith),[2] who died alongside many other Northmen while fighting King Æthelstan's English at the Battle of Brunanburh in 937 - which took place somewhere in southern Northumbria.[3] In all likelihood this *Arick mac Báirith* was the son of the *Bárid mac Oitir* killed by Ragnall grandson of Ímar in the naval engagement off the Isle of Man in 914 which was mentioned earlier.[4] Alternatively, following what was said about Baret, if a brother of Ohtor had actually died in the Archenfield in 914 and he was called Bárid (and thus probably the Baret of Tours) then *Arick mac Báirith* who died at the battle of Brunanburh in 937 could have been his son.[5] The Heric/Eiríkr at Tours in 903 fighting alongside Baret could then have been Baret's son or, perhaps more reasonably, his brother, he might even have been the supposed unnamed brother of Ohtor.

The next Eiríkr we find in the Insular world is the famous Eiríkr of York in the 950s. Eiríkr of York was arguably not Eric Bloodaxe, the son of the king of Norway Harald Fairhair, as is usually thought.[6] Nevertheless, whatever his origin Eiríkr of York's father was certainly called

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[1] Without giving references, all these 'Eriks' in Sweden and Denmark are found in Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, in Adam of Bremen's *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, as well as in several much later Norse compendia and sagas.

[2] There is no initial 'H' in Irish, see for instance Albann/Alpthann for Hálfdanr and Ágonn for Hákon. Given the initial 'A', Carl Marstrander, *Bidrag til det norske sprogs historie i Irland* (Kristiania, 1915). p. 48, suggested *Arick* might reflect the form Hárekr rather than Eiríkr, but at the end of day they are the same name. I thank C. Ecthingham for this point.

[3] Cf. *Annals of Clonmacnoise s.a.* 931 [=937]; A. Campbell, *The Battle of Brunanburh* (London, 1938), p. 159; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 245. A present scholarly view is that the Battle of Brunanburch took place on the Wirral in Cheshire, see for example M. Livingston (ed.), *The Battle of Brunanburh: A Casebook* (Liverpool, 2011), but there remain many other suggestions for the location.

[4] He might just conceivably be the son of *Báirith* who died in Dublin in 881, but I think this extremely unlikely given the likely age of fighting men at this time; see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 245, 247. This earlier *Báirith* is quite likely the man who appears first in the *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* in 867, and who may possibly be the *Baret* who raided Fleury in 865 as was discussed in an earlier chapter.

[5] It would not be unusual for a Scandinavian chieftain to name his son after a (perhaps recently deceased) brother, other relative or brother-in-arms.

[6] For a thorough discussion of this issue see C. Downham, 'Eric Bloodaxe-axed? The Mystery of the Last Viking King of York', *Mediaeval Scandinavia*, 14 (2004), pp. 51-77, which contains references to the relevant sources; see also A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 185-91; *idem*, 'Eric Bloodaxe revisited', *Northern History*, 34 (1998), pp. 189-93. A. Bugge, *Norges historie fremstillet for det norske folk* (Kristiana, 1910), vol. 1. 2, pp. 79 and 183, supposed that the Heric (or 'Eirik') at Tours was Eric Bloodaxe making viking raids in his youth. Even putting to one side the unlikelihood of the 'Norwegian' Eric Bloodaxe of late Scandinavian tradition being the historical Eiríkr of York in English records this makes no sense in terms of age. The *Heric* at Tours is much more likely to have had an Irish Sea provenance.

Harald, as every English source starting with the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* testifies.[1] Eiríkr's father Harald could have been a member of the family of the so-called 'dynasty of Ívarr' which ruled in both Dublin and York after Ragnall, the grandson of Ímar, arrived in Ireland in 917, and following his subsequent seizure of, or return to, York in 918/919 after the battle of Corbridge.[2] This identification has been proposed by Clare Downham and Alex Woolf, who suggest that Harald was Haraldr Sigtryggsson who controlled the Scandinavian *longphort* at Limerick and who died in 940.[3] It will be remembered that when the Northmen came to England from Brittany in 914 their leaders were Óttar and Haraldr, with the latter certainly being killed.

All this onomastic and chronological evidence is only suggestive and does not provide definite proof. Nevertheless, and I want to stress this, there is a strong *prima facie* case for suggesting that Bárðr came from an Irish background and was possibly related to the Óttar who came to England from Brittany in 914, before moving on to Ireland, and, less certainly, to Óttar's partner or brother Haraldr, who died at the hands of the English in the Archenfield. Eiríkr too could perhaps have shared such a background but this is much less certain.

The missing years and the Cuerdale hoard in Lancashire

As with other Scandinavian chieftains who were probably part of the post-902 Irish exile or diaspora we know nothing definite about the whereabouts and movements of Óttar and Bárðr, or indeed of Heric/Eiríkr who was at Tours, between 903 and 913.[4]

Some of the Dublin exiles went to Scotland and possibly the Isle of Man, others to Cumbria, Lancashire and (via Anglesey) to the Wirral.[5] Clare Downham says: 'During the late ninth and

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[1] Compare for example. *ASC* D, *s.a.* 952, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 113; *Henrici Archidiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum. The History of the English by Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon. From A.C. 55 to A.D. 1154*, ed. T. Arnold, vol. 2, p. 378; *Henry of Huntingdon*, *Henrici Archidiaconi Huntendunensis*, vol. 2, p. 378; *Henry of Huntingdon*, *Historia Anglorum. The History of the English people*, ed. and trans. D. E. Greenway (Oxford, 1996), pp. 316-17.

[2] *ASC* D and E, *s.a.* 923 [=918/919]; *Historia regum*, ed. T. Arnold, part 1, p. 93; W. S. Angus, 'The Annals for the Tenth Century in Symeon of Durham's Historia Regum', *Durham University Journal*, 32 (1940), pp. 213-29, at p. 224.

[3] C. Downham, 'Eric Bloodaxe-axed?', pp. 204-8; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 206-7. For an alternative view see B. Hudson, *Viking Pirates and Christian Princes. Dynasty, Religion and Empire in the North Atlantic* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 56-78.

[4] In the case of Ragnall, he is first mentioned fighting 'Bárid son of Oitir' in 914 off the Isle of Man.

[5] This is a very large subject and still full of debate; compare *inter alia* C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 83-85, 146-48; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 139-44; T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons, 350-1064* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 500-3; D. N. Dumville, *The Churches of Northern Britain in the First Viking-Age* (Whithorn Lecture, 5) (Whithorn, 1997), p. 29; N. J. Higham, 'Northumbria, Mercia and the Irish Sea Norse, 873-926', in J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *Viking Treasure from the North-West: the Cuerdale hoard in its context* (Liverpool, 1992), pp. 21-30, at p. 27; *idem*, 'Viking-Age Settlement in the North-Western Countryside: Lifting the Veil?', in J. Hines, A. Lane, and M. Redknap (eds.), *Land, Sea and Home: proceedings of a Conference on Viking-Period Settlement, at Cardiff, July 2001* (Leeds, 2004), pp. 297-311; D. Griffiths, *Vikings of the Irish Sea. Conflict and Assimilation AD 790-1050* (Stroud, 2010), pp. 41-45; A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian York and Dublin. The History and Archaeology of*

early tenth centuries a significant number of people seem to have emigrated from the viking settlements in the Gaelic-speaking world and established themselves in a wide arc of territory including Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, East Yorkshire, the Faeroes and the Cotentin Peninsula.'[1] I would tend to doubt this 'Cotentin Peninsula' idea but I will not pursue the matter here.

It is not known where the Scandinavian fleet or fleets which had attacked Tours were operating in the decade after 903. The Breton peninsula and the Cotentin might be doubtful while Alan the Great was ruling there - until 907 - and even for a few years after this because various charters and letters from the Breton abbey of Redon suggest that, as Henry Howorth quite rightly put it, 'things went on in the country in the normal way'.[2] We can probably also exclude the Seine. Some Northmen (possibly under Rollo) had arrived on the Seine between about 900 and 905; probably, it is argued, just before 905.[3] Much more likely is that those who had attacked Tours in 903 then returned to the British Isles, probably to north-west England. Walther Vogel, who is not always completely right but is always insightful, says they 'probably went back to the Irish Sea', 'wahrscheinlich zurück zum irischen Kanal'.[4]

This possibility gains some support from the contents of the 'viking hoard' found at Cuerdale on the river Ribble in Lancashire in 1840. This large silver hoard has very clear Irish connections,[5] but it also includes some 1,000 Carolingian coins most of which (about 900 of

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Two Related Viking Kingdoms (Dublin 1987), vol. 1, pp. 60-71; C. Etchingham, 'North Wales, Ireland and the Isles: the Insular Viking zone', *Peritia*, 15 (2002), pp. 145-87, at pp. 164-65; D. Ó Corráin, 'Ireland, Wales, Man, and the Hebrides', p. 97; J.-M. Picard, 'Early contacts between Ireland and Normandy: the cult of Irish saints in Normandy before the conquest', in M. Richter and J.-M. Picard (eds.), *Ogma: essays in Celtic studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Chatháin* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 85-93, at p. 92; S. M. Lewis, 'Vikings on the Ribble: Their Origin and Longphuirt', *Northern History*, 53. 1 (2016), pp. 8-25; H. H. Howorth, 'Ragnall Ivarson and Jarl Otir', *English Historical Review*, vol. XXVI, issue CI (1911), pp. 1-19.

[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 84 and n. 137. Here she is explicitly following D. N. Dumville, *The Churches of Northern Britain in the First Viking-Age*, p. 29.

[2] H. H. Howorth, 'Ragnall Ivarson and Jarl Oitir', p. 6. For 919 Flodoard of Reims reports: 'The Northmen ravaged, destroyed and annihilated all of Brittany in Cornouaille, which is located on the seashore. The Bretons were abducted and sold, while those who escaped were driven out': Flodoard *s.a.* 919: *Annales*, ed. Lauer, p. 1; *Annals*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, p. 3.

[3] See J. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IXe siècle', pp. 161-79; D. C. Douglas, 'Rollo of Normandy'. For the view that Rollo was established on the Seine before this time see for example P. Bauduin, 'Des raids scandinaves à l'établissement de la principauté de Rouen', in É. Deniaux, C. Lorren, P. Bauduin, and T. Jarry (eds.), *La Normandie avant les Normands, de la conquête romaine à l'arrivée des Vikings* (Rennes, 2002), pp. 365-415; *idem*, 'Chefs normands et élites franques, fin IXe-début Xe siècle', in P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), pp. 181-94; *idem*, *La première Normandie*. For the now minority view that Rollo arrived even later than this see H. H. Howorth, 'A Criticism of the Life of Rollo, as told by Dudo de St. Quentin', *Archaeologia*, 45. 2 (1880), pp. 235-50.

[4] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 391.

[5] See, for example, J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *The Cuerdale Hoard and related Viking-Age silver and gold from Britain and Ireland in the British Museum*, British Museum Research Publications, no. 185 (London, 2011); *idem*, 'The Northern Hoards: from Cuerdale to Bossall/Flaxton', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder, 899-924* (Manchester, 2011), pp. 212-29; D. Griffiths, *Vikings of the Irish Sea*, pp. 41-42, 52, 105-8, 143.

them) came, as Gareth Williams of the British Museum says, from the 'Western Frankish kingdom' and were 'likely the product of raiding alone, and some of the coins at least may plausibly be associated with the documented raid on Aquitaine in 898.[1] However, it is quite possible that this group results from more than one raid, including perhaps one or more on the Loire valley'.[2] Indeed so and quite possibly including the trip up the Loire and the attack on Tours in 903.

The Northmen who attacked Tours in 'the Loire valley' did, as has been argued, have Irish connections. The usual dating of the burial of the Cuerdale hoard is *c*.905-910, although James Graham-Campbell narrows the time range to nearer 905.[3] It could therefore be suggested that all or part of the fleet that had attacked Tours had returned to the Irish Sea zone and to the Ribble in Lancashire thereafter, before moving on elsewhere. Graham-Campbell says: 'The Cuerdale hoard may represent some part of the accumulation of resources by Hiberno-Norse exiles who were intent on using the Ribble estuary as a power base from which to re-establish control across the Irish Sea.'[4]

But let us now examine the 'documented raid on Aquitaine in 898' mentioned by Gareth Williams a little bit more.

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[1] For details of these Carolingian coins, including minting and dating, see P. Grierson and M. Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage, with a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, *vol. 1. The Early Middle Ages (Fifth–Tenth Centuries)* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 218-59.

[2] G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', in J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *The Cuerdale Hoard*, chap. 3, pp. 39-72, at pp. 49-50.

[3] J. Graham-Campbell, *The Northern Hoards,* p. 222**.**

[4] *Ibid*., p. 223. G. Williams ('The Cuerdale Coins', in J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *The Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 70-71) concludes that the hoard was 'assembled from a variety of sources at very different times' and that the 'hoard as a whole was only brought together a relatively short time before it was deposited'. Regarding the 'imported coins', that is those coming from Western France and the Low Countries, he says that 'these could just as well have come from York as from Ireland'. This is theoretically true, but with regard at least to the about 900 coins which came from the 'Western Frankish kingdom' and were 'likely the product of raiding alone', if these coins had come to Cuerdale via York we would probably have to imagine a York origin as well for the raiders who attacked Tours in 903 and those who were raiding along the Loire and in Aquitaine over the winter of 897-898 (for which see below). The analysis presented in this chapter would tend to support the idea of an Irish or Irish Sea link with the attackers of Tours, thus I tend to think that these continental coins arrived at Cuerdale via the Irish Sea.

Raids along the Loire and in Aquitaine over the winter of 897-898

The raid 'on Aquitaine' in 897-898 was as the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* seem to make quite clear undertaken by the chieftain *Huncdeus*,[1] who had arrived from England in the summer of 896[2] and then quickly been reinforced.[3] When *Huncdeus* arrived on the Seine in 896 King Odo was

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[1] *Huncdeus* is the spelling in both Brussels MMS; the MSS of Douai and Bamberg have *Hundeus*; the form *Hunedeus* comes from a mistake made by Dom Bouquet, followed by Pertz and many others since; see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 373, n. 2. There have been many, many speculations regarding the name. In various places J. Steenstrup suggested that the name *Huncdeus* was originally written *Hulcheus*, and being ON Helgi, which was transcribed by Orderic Vitalis as *Hulcius*, who according to Orderic was a paternal uncle of Rollo and that they came to invade 'Normandy' together. See J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 1, pp. 46, 158-59; II, p. 282; reed. 1972, p. 146; *idem*, *Etudes préliminaires pour servir à l'histoire des Normands et de leurs invasions* (Paris, 1881), p. 105; *idem*, *Les invasions normandes en France*, p. 50. For Orderic Vitalis see *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, vol. II, book VII, chap. 3, pp. 94-95. Actually, Steenstrup transformed Orderic Vitalis's *de stirpe Malahulcii* into *de stirpe mala Hulcii*. For a full discussion of this matter see L. Irlenbusch-Reynard, *Rollon: de l'histoire à la fiction. État des sources et essai biographique* (Brussels, 2016), pp. 156-58 and notes, who concludes (p. 158) that although we cannot exclude Rollo having an uncle called Malahulcius who participated in the conquest of Normandy it is difficult to conceive of as no other source makes mention of it. A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, p. 64, n. 2, says that Steenstrup's view is 'un peu hardie'; whilst for W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 373, n. 2, the idea of *Huncdeus* being *Hulcius* is 'at least very dubious or debatable'. I cannot explore this complex more here; I would just say that whilst the nephew/uncle relationship between (Mala)hulcius and Rollo is to be much doubted, the idea of the equivalence of the name Malahulcius or just Hulcius and the historical Huncdeus has much more in its favour. It is also worthy of more consideration that Lambert of Saint-Omer's early twelfth-century work/compilation the *Liber Floridus* replaces the historical Huncdeus of 896 with Rollo/Rotlo, for which see initially L. Irlenbusch-Reynard, *Rollon*, pp. 45-48. Various rather forced and unconvincing attempts have also been made by British numismatists to equate Huncdeus with the 'King Cnut' found on many coins in the Cuerdale hoard, as are referenced later.

[2] *AV* 896: ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland: 'The Northmen once again entered the Seine, with a leader called Huncdeus and five large ships. And as long as the King's attention was turned elsewhere, he made his own misfortune and that of the kingdom greatly increase. […] And the Northmen, now swollen in numbers, entered the Oise a few days before the birth of our Lord, and secured their base at Choisy-au-Bac, without anyone trying to stop them.' That Huncdeus came from England seems to be corroborated by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which says in MS A that in 897 [=896]: 'Then in the summer of this year, the raiding-army went off, some to East Anglia, some to Northumbria, and those who were without money got themselves ships there [in Northumbria?], and went south across the sea to the Seine.' This arrival is also mentioned by the contemporary Abbo of Saint-Germain, see *Abbon. Le siège de Paris par les Normands. Poème du IXe siècle*, ed. and trans. H. Waquet (Paris, 1942), pp. 110-113. For the precise date of Huncdeus's arrival in 896 compare É. Favre, *Eudes, comte de Paris et roi de France (882-898)* (Paris, 1893), p. 187, n. 2; J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 2, p. 282, n. 3; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 376, n. 3. In conclusion, Huncdeus arrived in the summer of 896.

[3] Or at least part of the force associated with him. See *ASC* 897 [=896]; *AV* 896, ed. von Simson, p. 78; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 373-77. W. Vogel (*ibid*., p. 376, n. 3) says that it is 'possible' that Rollo was 'at the head of the reinforcements coming from England' (that is supposedly to reinforce Huncdeus), although his conclusion (*ibid*.) is that we certainly have no proof at all that Rollo came to West Francia in 896, and that 'a later arrival is indeed more probable', 'eine spätere Ankunft ist sogar wahrscheinlicher', an opinion with which I fully agree. It should be pointed out here that the 'reinforcements' who clearly arrived later in 896 after Huncdeus's five ships had come in the summer came, according to Vogel, from England. Although like most historians I assume this as well it is by no means certain, they could have come from elsewhere; the comment of the *Saint-Vaast* annalist that at the end of 896: 'The Northmen, now swollen in numbers, entered the Oise a few days before the birth of our Lord, and secured their base at Choisy-au-Bac, without anyone trying to stop them' (*AV* 896, ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland), does not completely prove that these implied reinforcements had come to join Huncdeus and certainly not that they too had come from England, although for the time being I still presume they did. An alternative idea would be that although Huncdeus had in 897 treated with Charles the Simple and been baptised at his hand (see below) it was these later 'reinforcements' under an unnamed leader who subsequently then negotiated with King Odo and made to trip to the Loire over the winter of 897-98.

on the Loire at Orléans.[1] As the *Annals of Saint-Vaast s.a.* 896 say: 'And as long as the King's [Odo's] attention was turned elsewhere, he made his own misfortune and that of the kingdom greatly increase.'[2] But by the beginning of 897 Odo had returned to between the Oise and the Meuse, and the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* tell us that: 'After that, they [the Northmen] moved out as far as the Meuse in search of loot, without meeting any resistance from anyone. The King's army [Odo's there is no doubt] did in fact run into them as they were returning from pillaging, but achieved nothing. Even so, when the Northmen got back to their ships, they were afraid that such a numerous army would blockade them, and so went back to the Seine, where they remained for the whole of the summer, busy looting, without anyone offering them any resistance.'[3]

The contemporary witness Abbo of Saint-Germain complains at great length of Odo's inaction when these 'cruel pagans' arrived in 896 and how they captured and then sent 'les paysans' over the sea (*trans mare*, that is to England),[4] which certainly reflects their continuing relations with their compatriots still in England. According to Jacques Le Maho regarding these Northmen, 'il semble que son chef *Hundeus* ait eu, dès l'abord, l'intention de traiter avec les autorités carolingiennes. Il ne pouvait cependant espérer aucun geste du roi Eudes, hostile depuis toujours à toute espèce d'arrangement avec les Normands. Il alla donc trouver Charles le Simple, relégué par Eudes en Lotharingie. Celui-ci [Charles] lui proposa le baptême, provoquant, comme on sait, la colère de l'archevêque Foulques de Reims'.[5] The *Annals of Saint-Vaast* say: 'But Charles had Huncdeus brought to him, and lifted him from the baptismal font in the monastery of Denain at Easter,'[6] which seems to place the initiative with Charles. It seems that Charles in his very desperate situation in his fight with Odo had made an appeal to the Northmen to come to his aid, perhaps to make an alliance against Odo.[7] The *colère* of archbishop Fulk of Reims was

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 375, and n. 3; É. Favre, *Eudes*, pp. 186-87; É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', pp. 436-40.
[2] *AV* 896: ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland.
[3] *AV* 897: ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland.
[4] Abbo of Saint-Germain, *Abbon, Le siège de Paris par les Normands*, ed. and trans. H. Waquet, pp. 110-113. See also É. Favre, *Eudes*, pp. 186-87.
[5] J. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IXe siècle', p. 178. See also his comment (*ibid*., pp. 178-79): 'L'acceptation du baptême par un chef normand appelait normalement une contrepartie en terre ou en argent, mais, en l'occurrence, on ignore ce qui fut accordé ou promis à *Hundeus*. Il est en tout cas certain qu'à cette époque Charles n'était pas en mesure de disposer de la moindre terre du fisc dans la partie ouest du royaume, cette dernière étant entièrement sous le contrôle d'Eudes.'
[6] *AV* 897: ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland. Easter was on 27 March 897. It should be noted here that only the Douai and Bamberg manuscripts have *Duninio/Duinio*; the Brussels manuscripts have *Cluninio* (Cluny). Regarding Cluny W. Vogel (*Die Normannen*, p. 377, n. 2) has rightly noted that the monastery of Cluny was only founded in 910. The location of *Denain* is not sure. É. Favre, *Eudes*, p. 61, amongst others, places it at Klingenmünster (near Landau in the Rhineland-Palatinate), but Vogel (*ibid.*) finds this very unlikely.
[7] Cf. A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, pp. 24-25; É. Favre, *Eudes*, pp. 187-89. A. Eckel (*ibid*., p. 25 and p. 64) relates this proposed 'alliance' of 897 to that made between Rollo and Charles in 911: 'Peut-être cette tentative d'alliance avec les Normands n'a-t-elle été que le prélude de celle de 911, qui aboutit si heureusement, et il est à remarquer qu'en 897, comme quatorze ans plus tard, Charles a pris soin de faire baptiser le chef normand avant d'entamer

expressed in a letter he wrote to Charles, telling him in no uncertain terms and at great length that he should not deal with these enemies of God.[1] This letter seems to have been enough to deter Charles from pursuing any alliance further and there was certainly no immediate result.

The Northmen continued their raids. Later in the year: 'The Northmen, now trusting in sheer weight of numbers,[2] laid waste all that was left of the kingdom with fire and the sword. So the King [Odo] sent word to them that he wanted to ransom the kingdom,[3] and having come to an agreement, they made their way to the banks of the Loire for the winter.'[4] King Odo had just come to terms with Charles[5] and therefore he could turn his attention to ridding the kingdom of Francia of these Northmen. Perhaps because of the latter's numbers (they now had 'sheer weight of numbers') he did not try or dare to attack them. Instead, he came to an agreement with them (*et facto placito*). This begs a number of questions: What had Odo given or promised the Northmen to get them to leave his kingdom? Why had he sent them to the Loire? And why only to overwinter? We cannot get into the mind of a Frankish king of the ninth century so it is impossible to really know. On the question of why had he sent them to the Loire, Favre found this curious. Why, he asked, had Odo in order to liberate his kingdom directed the Northmen to the Loire at the expense of Aquitaine, and particularly at the expense of Neustria which had been constantly faithful to him. Favre conjectures that perhaps this was a condition imposed on him 'par les Francs du Nord', and that Odo had to accept it so as not to put to the test their recent fidelity.[6] Possibly, but we can never be sure. From the point of view of the Northmen what might

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avec lui des négociations sérieuses', and referring to Huncdeus and his men in 897 speculates: 'Si, comme il est permis de le supposer, ce furent, du moins en partie, les mêmes hommes qui, en 911, se trouvaient sous la conduite de Rollon, qui sait si, en passant outre aux menaces de Foulques, Charles n'aurait pas épargné au pays quatorze années de ruines et de désolation?' To this Vogel (*ibid*., p. 377, n. 1) remarks, amongst other things, that, 'Die Vorgänge von 911 waren gänzlich verschieden von denen in Jahre 897', 'The happenings of 911 [the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte and Rollo's baptism as reported by Dudo] were completely different from those that took place in 897'. I would add that Eckel's idea that the Northmen of 897 and those of Rollo in 911 were 'at least in part' the same men is just wishful thinking.

[1] Flodoard, *HRE*, IV.5, pp. 384-85. See also A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, pp. 62-63; É. Favre, *Eudes*, pp. 187-88; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc*, p. 69, n. 5. É. Favre (*ibid*., p. 187) says, probably quite rightly, that in 897 'Charles eut alors l'idée de s'allier à ces barbares et de se servir d'eux pour monter sur le trône'. However, after mentioning Archbishop's Fulk's damning letter he gets most of the chronology of events in 897 quite wrong: cf. É. Favre, *Eudes*, p. 189.

[2] One can wonder if they had again been reinforced.

[3] That is he was ready to buy them off.

[4] *AV* 897: ed. von Simson, p. 79; trans. Coupland. It is extremely unlikely as É. Favre (*Eudes*, p. 192) proposed that they left their fleet on the Seine.

[5] *AV* 897: ed. von Simson, pp. 78-79; trans. Coupland: 'But subsequently [after Easter] those who were with Charles, seeing that they were so few in number and had no safe place of refuge, once again sent a message to King Odo that he should recall that their lord was the son of his former lord, and that he should grant Charles some part of his father's kingdom. And after consultation with his men, the King replied that he would willingly show him mercy, if he had the opportunity, and once messengers had run back and forth, Charles came to him, and the king received him with kindness, and gave him as much of the kingdom as seemed right, with the promise of more.'

[6] É. Favre, *Eudes*, p. 193.

have been an acceptable payment or promise to get them to leave the North for the Loire? Just the opportunity to raid along the Loire into Neustria and Aquitaine (which they did) can surely not have been enough because they could have done this anyway and at any time they wanted. This leads to the speculation that Odo must have paid them a tribute, but not necessarily as was sometimes done in agreements between the Northmen and Frankish kings to get the Northmen to leave 'and never return', but here more for a period of truce for the winter which would also explain the Saint-Vaast annalist's words.[1] Indeed this annalist, writing at Arras, after telling of Odo's death on 1 January 898 then tells us: 'In the spring the Northmen returned to their ships, leaving Neustria and part of Aquitaine desolate, as well as having destroyed a large number of strongholds and killed their occupants'.[2] This means they returned to the north.[3]

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[1] J. Lair (Dudo: ed Lair, p. 161, nn. a and b) long ago suggested that the story of a truce between Rollo and Charles the Simple after a return from England, etc. etc., found in book 2, chaps. 20 and 21 of Dudo's *De moribus* (Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 160-61; trans. Christiansen, pp. 41-42) is a borrowing from real events in the period 897-898 as reported by the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* and by Flodoard. This is undoubtedly correct, but it should be added that many other things in *De moribus* are also taken from this period and erroneously put in the name of Rollo.

[2] For the whole passage see *AV* 897-898: ed. von Simson, pp. 78-80; trans. Coupland: '(896) At the same time the Northmen once again entered the Seine, with a leader called Huncdeus and five large ships. And as long as the King's attention was turned elsewhere, he made his own misfortune and that of the kingdom greatly increase. [...] And the Northmen, now swollen in numbers, entered the Oise a few days before the birth of our Lord, and secured their base at Choisy-au-Bac, without anyone trying to stop them. (897). After that, they moved out as far as the Meuse in search of loot, without meeting any resistance from anyone. The King's army did in fact run into them as they were returning from pillaging, but achieved nothing. Even so, when the Northmen got back to their ships, they were afraid that such a numerous army would blockade them, and so went back to the Seine, where they remained for the whole of the summer, busy looting, without anyone offering them any resistance. But Charles had Huncdeus brought to him, and lifted him from the baptismal font in the monastery of Denain at Easter. [...] The Northmen, now trusting in sheer weight of numbers, laid waste all that was left of the kingdom with fire and the sword. So the King sent word to them that he wanted to ransom the kingdom, and having come to an agreement, they made their way to the banks of the Loire for the winter.'

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 379 and n. 1. A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, pp. 64-65, always ready as he was to admit Rollo into the picture, says, and very erroneously: 'A la mort d'Eudes [which happened on 1 January 898 according to the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*], les Normands, se croyant délivrés d'un adversaire redoutable, recommencèrent aussitôt leurs courses aventureuses. Dès le printemps de l'année 898, ils reprirent les armes et deux de leurs bandes se mirent en campagne. L'une d'elles, recrutée probablement surtout parmi les Normands cantonnés sur la basse Loire, alla dévaster l'Aquitaine ; on ne sait ce qu'elle devint. L'autre expédition, composée peut-être de compagnons de Rollon, fut plus importante, mais tourna au désavantage des envahisseurs. Cette bande, qui s'en retournait, chargée de butin, vers son campement, fut surprise dans le Vimeu par Charles qui, tout en ne disposant que d'un petit nombre de soldats, lui infligea néanmoins des pertes assez sérieuses et l'obligea à se retirer sur ses vaisseaux ; de là, les Normands s'en retournèrent dans leur forteresse d'*Inguerobs*, appelée *Mosterium*, dont la position ne nous est pas connue.' He then (*ibid.*) goes on to accept that they (Rollo's band) then went to Brittany! To which I would just say that there were no Northmen 'cantonnés sur la basse Loire' in 898, who subsequently then disappear into an unknown ether; a correct reading of the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* makes this very clear as Walther Vogel showed. Also, the whole idea of a 'plus importante' band under Rollo is just wishful thinking.

898 and after in the North

As was mentioned a little earlier, Gareth Williams of the British Museum suggested that the many West Frankish Carolingian coins found in the famous Cuerdale hoard buried in *c*.905 on the Ribble in Lancashire had likely been acquired during the raid into Aquitaine 'in 898', or more generally that 'it is quite possible that this group results from more than one raid, including perhaps one or more on the Loire valley';[1] above we have examined the raids along the Loire over the winter of 897-898 and the attack on Tours on the Loire in 903 in this context.

But regarding another large group of about 100 Carolingian coins also found in the Cuerdale hoard, according to Williams these 'were issued in mints of the so-called "Middle Kingdom", or Lotharingia, running from Quentovic and the Netherlands in the north down through Switzerland to northern Italy in the south'.[2] It is of great interest that according to Williams these could not have been 'acquired anywhere other than the Netherlands, because raids elsewhere in the Middle Kingdom were rare. By contrast, the North Sea coastal parts were the target of repeated raids, and it is possible - and even likely - that these coins derive from more than one raids in the area', which is, Williams says, 'extremely significant for the dating of the hoard'.[3] It is important to note here that Williams's 'Netherlands' does not really mean just the

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[1] G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', in J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *The Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 49-50.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 49, and p. 60.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 49. Although I cannot explore the issue in any depth here, one should also consider the various coins in the Cuerdale hoard minted at York (and some perhaps elsewhere) in the names of Siefredus/Sievert and Cnut, for which see to start with see M. L. Gooch, *Money and Power in the Viking Kingdom of York c.895-954*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Durham, 2012), pp. 48-59; C. E. Blunt, 'The composition of the Cuerdale hoard', *British Numismatic Journal*, 53 (1983), pp. 1-6; M. Dhénin and P. Leclercq, 'The Coins of Quentovic from the Cuerdale Hoard in the Museum of Boulogne-sur-Mer', *British Numismatic Journal*, 52 (1982), pp. 104-7; G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', pp. 43-47; C. S. S. Lyon and B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'The Northumbrian Viking Coinage in the Cuerdale Hoard', in R. H. M. Dolley (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to F.M. Stenton on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday* (London, 1961), pp. 96-121; B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'CVNETTI Reconsidered', in D. M. Metcalf (ed.), *Coinage in Ninth Century Northumbria*, *British Archaeological Reports*, *British series*, 180 (Oxford, 1987), pp. 345-54; C. E. Blunt, B. H. I. H. Stewart and C. S. S. Lyon, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England: From Edward the Elder to Edgar's Reform* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 102-3; M. A. S. Blackburn, 'Presidential address 2005, Currency under the Vikings, Part 2: The two Scandinavian kingdoms of the Danelaw, *c*.895–954', *British Numismatic Journal*, 76 (2006), pp. 204-26. According to C. E. Blunt *et al*, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England*, p. 102, Siefredus or Sievert 'is presumably to be identified with one *Sigeferth* described by Æthelweard as "a pirate from the land of the Northumbrians" who attacked the Devonshire coast in *c*.894 and may have been associated with other recorded raids on southern England and a visit to Dublin at about that time', (followed by G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', p. 47; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 79; M. A. S. Blackburn, 'Presidential address 2005, Currency under the Vikings, Part 2', p. 205; see also for this idea A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian York*, pp. 33-37, 46-47); although this is not at all uncontested: M. L. Gooch, *Money and Power in the Viking Kingdom of York,* p. 48, says: 'Siefred is spelled on the coins as both the Latinised *Siefredus* and the Anglicised *Sievert* on his coins. There are some suggestions that a man named Sigeferth, who raided off the coast of Devon in 893, was the same man as named upon the coins of York. The argument is not entirely convincing as the Sigeferth from the Irish Annals seems to have raided the West coast of England in 893 and there is no further evidence to place him in York. It is preferable to leave the origins of Siefred a mystery rather than to attribute him to someone who may be entirely different but has a similar name.' Regarding the King Cnut (CNVT REX) coins in the hoard, this Cnut (ON Knútr) would certainly appear to have been 'a' (not necessarily 'the') king operating

modern state but more generally what are usually called the Low Countries including much of Belgium and the north-eastern parts of France. But where and when in the Low Countries/Netherlands could these Carolingian coins have been obtained by Northmen who subsequently buried them on the Ribble?

The raid into Aquitaine and Neustria happened over the winter of 897-898 and had originated on the Seine. As we have seen the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* tell us that in 898: 'In the spring the Northmen returned to their ships, leaving Neustria and part of Aquitaine desolate, as well as having destroyed a large number of strongholds and killed their occupants.'[1] When they got back to the north the same annals report: 'Post haec rex Karolus cum exercitu parvo Nortmannis a praeda revertentibus in pago Vitmau iuxta quandam ...[2] insecutus, aliquibus suorum interfectis plurimisque vulneratis Nortmanni more solito loca inoportuna tenentes rediere ad naves.'[3]

So, after first being in the *pagus* of Vimeu the Northmen then went *iuxta quandam insecutus*. Bernhard von Simson asked whether the word *quandam* might mean a place, perhaps a river.[4] Ferdindand Lot answers von Simson: 'Il n'a pas cherché à l'identifier. La chose est pourtant facile : « juxta quandam » est pour « juxta quantiam ». Il s'agit de la Canche et la Canche passe à Montreuil.'[5] So if this interpretation of the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* is correct then Northmen

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in Northumbria around the turn of the century; see for example A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian York and Dublin*, vol. 1, pp. 47-49; B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'CVNETTI Reconsidered', p. 347; M. A. S. Blackburn, 'Presidential address 2005, Currency under the Vikings, Part 2', p. 205. In terms of the Cuerdale hoard a substantial number of these CNVT REX coins have a reverse inscription CVNNETTI. This was once interpreted to mean a mint at Quentovic on the Canche (starting with C. F. Keary, *A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum. Anglo-Saxon Series,* vol. 1 (London, 1887), p. 210); but more recently various rather unconvincing attempts were made to identify Cunetti as a person (Cnut) and identical with the chieftain 'Hun(e)deus' who arrived on the Seine in 896, and who has been discussed earlier; see for example C. S. S. Lyon and B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'The Northumbrian Viking Coinage in the Cuerdale Hoard', p. 117; and B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'CVNETTI Reconsidered', p. 348. G. Williams, 'The Cuerdale Coins', pp. 43-45, discusses this but ultimately says that whether *Cunetti* was a place-name or a by-name for Cnut 'remains open'. Regarding this suggestion, C. E. Blunt *et al*, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England*, p. 103, say if 'Hun(e)deus who led a band of northern raiders [...] down the Seine in 896', was 'baptised in 897', and whose band 'continued their activities in the Loire basin and further afield the next year [...] is not to be identified as the Cnut of the coins, it must have been someone with a very similar career'. Thus, was Cnut meant to have been operating on the Continent/in France before coming to Northumbria? There is nothing untoward about this idea because when Huncdeus first arrived in 896 he came with only five ships, but was quickly heavily reinforced by a fleet led by an unknown chieftain.

[1] *AV* 898: ed. von Simson, p. 79; trans. Coupland.

[2] Only the Brussels MSS insert the word *villa* here, and hence Coupland translates this passage as: 'Then King Charles and a small army attacked the Northmen near a certain village in the Vimeu region as they were returning from their plundering. Some of their men were killed, and many more wounded, and in their usual way the Northmen kept to difficult terrain and returned to their ships.' But as Lot noted (cf. F. Lot, 'Un prétendu repaire de pirates normands au IXe siècle, Inguerobs et les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer et d'Étaples', in *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 89. 3 (1945), pp. 423-32, at p. 426): 'Inutile de chercher cette villa. Elle n'existe pas. Ce mot est une addition d'un des manuscrits de Bruxelles. Les autres manuscrits portent : « juxta quandam insecutus, aliquibus suorum interfectis, etc. ».'

[3] *AV* 898: ed. von Simson, p. 80.

[4] B. von Simson, *Annales Vedastini*, p. 80, n. h.

[5] F. Lot, 'Un prétendu repaire de pirates normands au IXe siècle', pp. 426-27. He is followed in this by J. Lestocquoy, 'Les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer', *Revue du Nord*, 30. 118-19 (1948), pp. 184-96, at pp. 186-87.

after being confronted by Charles the Simple's force in the *pagus* of Vimeu had then moved on to the Canche, suffered a setback and then retreated to their ships.[1]

Regarding this possible raid up the Canche in 898, the Douai and Bamberg manuscripts of the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* have later additions or interpolations[2] which may provide some extra information on the flow of events for the year 898 to that found in all four manuscripts.[3] The Bamberg manuscript adds on blank spaces in the middle of events happening in 898: 'Castrum quod dicitur Mosterio vel Inguer obsed' [that is *obsederunt*], the Douai manuscript has the words *Inguerobs dicitur*, which is just a contraction of *Inguer obsederunt*.[4]

The suggested siege of a *castrum* called *Mosterio vel Inguer* left some early historians at a loss regarding where this *castrum* might have been. However, Auguste Eckel and Walther Vogel suggested it could be referring to Montreuil-sur-Mer (dep. Pas-de-Calais)[5] on the river Canche not far upstream of the important *emporium* of Quentovic. That this is so was strongly argued for by Ferdinand Lot,[6] and later, and even more convincingly, by Hubert Le Bourdellès.[7] Thus

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H. Le Bourdellès, 'Les problèmes linguistiques de Montreuil-sur-Mer : les origines de la ville à travers ses noms successifs', *Revue du Nord*, 63. 251 (1981), pp. 947-60, at p. 954, says: 'Les *Annales Vedastini* narrent ainsi les opérations de Charles le Simple contre les Normands en 898: "Le roi Charles, avec une petite armée, poursuivit les Normands qui revenaient du pillage, dans le pays du Vimeu, et jusqu'à la Canche (*Juxta quandam*, codd. ; *juxta Quantiam* …). Certains des leurs avaient été tués, beaucoup avaient été blessés, aussi les Normands, suivant leur habitude, tenant ces lieux pour peu propices à leurs desseins (*loca inoportuna tenentes*) retournèrent à leurs navires"'.

[1] A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, pp. 64-65, says that the Northmen (of Rollo no less!) when returning to their camp from a raid loaded with their spoils were surprised by Charles in the Vimeu, and that Charles although he had at his disposal only a few soldiers inflicted serious losses on the Northmen, obliging them to retire to their ships and, from there, return to their *forteresse* of *Inguerobs*, also called *Mosterium*, whose location, he says, is not known, although as noted below he then suggests that this was Montreuil-sur-Mer (*ibid*., p. 65, n. 1). He also (*ibid*., pp. 65-66, n. 3) refers to the *Life of Saint Vivent* which has the raid into Burgundy in 898 being led by 'Astingus', that is Hasting, which he finds *peu probable*, with which I agree. However, he places this attack into Burgundy in 898 at the door of Rollo which is also *peu probable*. For this raid see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 381-82 and notes.

[2] Generally suggested as being of the eleventh century.

[3] But it should be added that in the Bamberg manuscript of the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* at the end of these interpolations (particularly that regarding a hypothetical and unlikely raid into Brittany) is added the dating: 'DCCCXCVIIII' (see *AV* 898: ed. von Simson, p. 80), hence 899, but this must be a mistake for 889.

[4] F. Lot, 'Un prétendu repaire de pirates normands au IXe siècle', p. 424; B. von Simson, *Annales Vedastini*, p. 80, n. w. There is also then another added passage about a disastrous raid on Brittany: 'The Northmen made for Brittany, in order to spend the winter there. But when the Bretons gathered to resist them in battle, the Northmen turned tail, and the Bretons killed nearly fourteen thousand of them, and so they went back to their ships on the Seine', hence supposedly over the winter of 898 to 899. This later interpolation, which could well have originally been a marginal gloss, is very clearly a confusion with the actual raid to Brittany from the Seine and the return there a decade before, in 889-890, as reported in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* itself and by Regino of Prüm. Indeed, the great losses of the Northmen - fourteen thousand no less - is very reminiscent of Regino's report of huge Scandinavian losses in Brittany a decade before. Cutting a rather long story short, there was most certainly no Scandinavian raid into Brittany over the winter of 898-899.

[5] A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, p. 65, n. 1; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 380, nn. 1 and 2 (although he was still doubtful about the worth of this addition); followed by B. von Simson, *Annales Vedastini*, p. 80, n. 6.

[6] F. Lot, 'Un prétendu repaire de pirates normands au IXe siècle', pp. 423-27, followed by J. Lestocquoy, 'Les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer', pp. 186-87.

[7] H. Le Bourdellès, 'Les problèmes linguistiques de Montreuil-sur-Mer', pp. 947-60.

Lot interprets the sentence as meaning: 'Les Normands assiégèrent en vain le château dit Montreuil.'[1] Lestocquoy says: 'En 898 les Normands mettent le siege' - of Montreuil.[2]

Such a view has more recently been accepted by most historians, such as, and just for example, Lebecq, Bauduin, Mériaux and Barbier.[3] The general idea is that in 898 the merchants and population of Quentovic sought refuge at the more defensible site of Montreuil, never to return to the site of Quentovic.[4] As Le Bourdellès says: 'Nous savons que les Normands, basés sur la Canche,[5] ont fait une expédition jusque dans le Vimeu, ont été repoussés par le roi Charles, ont assiégé la ville forte de Montreuil (*castrum*), sans résultat, puisqu'ils ont repris la mer. II y avait donc bien un danger normand sur la Canche. Et l'on voit ce qui a entrainé la disparition de Quentowic. Le port situé dans la vallée n'était pas défendable. A la différence d'autres villes qui, à l'époque, furent munies de remparts, un transfert fut nécessaire. La population fut établie sur l'éperon formidable, où ne se voyait, jusque-là, que le petit monastère, *Monasteriolum*, filiale de Saint-Wandrille. Mais ville forte-refuge à l'origine, Montreuil se substitua définitivement à Quentowic dans sa fonction commerciale. Le port de la ville basse,

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[1] F. Lot, 'Un prétendu repaire de pirates normands au IXe siècle, p. 425.

[2] J. Lestocquoy, 'Les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer', p. 187.

[3] It is probable that the merchants of Quentovic had erected a *castra* at their possession of 'Montreuil-sur-Mer' not long before 898, for which see H. Le Bourdellès, 'Les problèmes linguistiques de Montreuil-sur-Mer'; P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 321; S. Lebecq, 'Quentovic: un état de la question', in S. Lebecq (ed.), *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Age*, vol. 2, *Centres, communications, échanges* (Lille, 2011), pp. 149-64; *idem*, 'Pour une histoire parallèle de Quentovic et de Dorestad', in J.-M. Duvoquel and A. Dierkens (eds.), *Villes et Campagnes au Moyen Âge, Mélanges Georges Despy* (Liège, 1991), pp. 415-28, at p. 427; J. Barbier, 'Du *vicus* de la Canche au *castrum* de Montreuil, un chaînon manquant : le fiscus d'Attin ?', in S. Lebecq, B. Bethouart, and L. Verslype (eds.), *Quentovic. Environnement, archéologie, histoire*, *Actes du colloque international de Montreuil-sur-Mer, Etaples et Le Touquet et de la journée d'études de Lille sur les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer (11-13 mai 2006 et 1er décembre 2006)* (Lille, 2010), pp. 431-57, at pp. 449-57; C. Mériaux, 'Bretons et Normands entre Somme et Escaut pendant le haut Moyen Âge', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 19-33, at p. 26. P. Bauduin (*La première Normandie*, p. 151) says: 'Le château de Montreuil est attesté par une addition au manuscrit des *Annales de Saint-Vaast.* En 898, Charles le Simple poursuivit des Normands qui revenaient d'une expédition du pillage en Vimeu, Repoussés, ils retournèrent à leurs navires et *castrum quod dicitur Mostorioulinguer obs*[*ederunt*]. S'il est possible de reconnaître Montreuil dans la forme *Mostorio / Mostorioul*, l'ensemble de la séquence *Mostoriouelinger* peut donner lieu à plusieurs lectures. Celle la plus souvent retenue aujourd'hui invite à y lire le nom *Mosterioul in Guis*, le dernier terme (*Guis*) représentant une variante picarde de [Quento]vic : ainsi reconstitué, le toponyme soulignerait la filiation entre Montreuil et le « vicus de la Canche ». Il est vraisemblable en effet que le territoire où s'éleva le château relevait à l'origine du district urbain de Quentovic. L'éponyme de la ville (*Monasteriolum*) montre clairement l'existence d'une église antérieure à la fondation du château, probablement l'église Saint-Pierre élevée par les moines de Fontenelle sur leurs possessions *in portus Wiscus*. À la fin du IXe siècle, l'activité du port de Quentovic, trop exposée aux attaques vikings, se serait ainsi déplacée vers l'amont, en un lieu plus facile à défendre et bientôt doté d'un château autour de l'église Saint-Pierre.'

[4] Cf. H. Le Bourdellès, 'Les problèmes linguistiques de Montreuil-sur-Mer', pp. 953-55 and S. Lebecq, 'Quentovic : un état de la question', pp. 163-64. For more on Quentovic and Montreuil see all the articles in S. Lebecq, B. Bethouart, and L. Verslype (eds.), *Quentovic. Environnement, archéologie, histoire*, and S. Lebecq and A. Gautier, 'Routeways between England and the Continent in the Tenth Century'.

[5] This is Le Bourdellès's interpretation, that is that the Northmen had been based on the Canche from where they raided the *pagus* of Vimeu and to where they returned afterwards.

accessible au trafic maritime par des navires de petit tonnage, se consacra au mouvement des denrées […].[1]

Following Le Bourdellès, Stéphane Lebecq places the move in '898', and adds that: 'Montreuil apparait en effet dans les sources au moment où Quentovic disparait - au seuil du Xe siècle.'[2] But it has to be emphasised that the effacement of Quentovic and the date of the re-establishment of the merchant community at Montreuil remains uncertain as the *castellum* of Montreuil is only really first attested by Flodoard of Reims, and following him Richer of Reims, from 939,[3] and this whole dossier must also surely be considered in relationship with later stories from Flanders including (but not limited to) Lambert of Ardres' *The History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres* which I unfortunately cannot explore more here.[4] But putting all the very necessary scepticism to one side for the moment, it is not inconceivable that the Northmen in the Vimeu region (of the Somme) in 898 had indeed also made a ship-borne incursion up the nearby river Canche which had caused the population of Quentovic to flee to their new *castrum* at Montreuil, where perhaps the Northmen besieged them, although seemingly without success.

What is the relevance of this long detour about the Canche, Quentovic and Montreuil in 898? The answer is that it may have been at this time when all the many coins in the Cuerdale hoard coming from the Low Countries/Netherlands, including Quentovic, as highlighted by Gareth Williams, could have been collected.

If it really had been in *c.*898 that these many coins (or some of them) were collected then this opens up another can of worms for our study of 'Aquitanian connections' because we know what these Northmen did during the next two years.

After the confrontation with Charles the Simple in the Vimeu region in 898, and the trip to the Canche, the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* tell us what these same Northmen did next, from late 898 into 899: 'In the winter they headed for Burgundy, where they established their base for the winter. But Count Richard[5] engaged them in battle on the night of Holy Innocents [28 December 898],

[1] H. Le Bourdellès, 'Les problèmes linguistiques de Montreuil-sur-Mer', pp. 954-55.
[2] S. Lebecq, 'Quentovic : un état de la question', p. 163.
[3] For the early history of Montreuil in the tenth century see also P. Bauduin, 'Montreuil et la construction de la frontière du duché de Normandie'; J.-F. Nieus, 'Montreuil et l'expansion du comté de Flandre au Xe siècle'; J. Barbier, 'Du *vicus* de la Canche au *castrum* de Montreuil, un chaînon manquant', all three in S. Lebecq, B. Bethouart, and L. Verslype (eds.), *Quentovic. Environnement, archéologie, histoire*, at pp. 475-91, pp. 493-505 and pp. 431-57 respectively.
[4] See in the first instance Lambert of Ardres, *The History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres*, trans. L. Shopkow (Philadelphia, 2007).
[5] That is the Burgundian Richard the Justiciar.

and emerged the victor, forcing them to return to the Seine.'[1] The annals then continue for 899: 'In the month of November [of 899], the Northmen set out as if to consolidate a base for themselves on the Oise, and roamed through the whole area up to the Meuse. Although King Zwentibold pursued them, he failed to catch them.'[2] It should be mentioned that this 'roaming' in the 'whole area up to the Meuse', which was obviously threatening Zwentibold's Lotharingia, is also another occasion during which some of the 'Low Countries' coins in the Cuerdale hoard could have been collected.[3]

Jumping then to the year 900, the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* tell us: 'In the summer, King Charles [the Simple] encamped on the Oise with the army which he had mustered, to consider what they should do about his enemies.'[4] Then the annals say that later in the same year: 'The King, together with Robert,[5] Richard,[6] and Herbert,[7] began to discuss the Northmen, and what they should do about them.[8] This is the last mention of any Northmen, and even those perhaps based around Rouen, because the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* suddenly cease at this point, in the second half of 900.

It is precisely because the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* stop at this point that we have no evidence at all of what King Charles and his magnates did or did not do against these Northmen thereafter. It has, possibly rightly, been claimed that it was before or up to the turn of the century that some Northmen were beginning to establish themselves on the Lower Seine, particularly around Rouen.[9] But what these Northmen did after 900 is completely unknown.

For our purposes the question is this: How and when could so many Carolingian coins which may have been obtained during the period 897 to (say) 899 in the raids just described above have

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[1] *AV* 898: ed. von Simson, p. 80; trans. Coupland. For this incursion into Burgundy and its chronology plus all the Northmen's subsequent movements up until 900 see W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 380-82 and notes.

[2] *AV* 899: ed. von Simson, p. 81; trans. Coupland.

[3] We should here also not forget that in 897, after the chieftain Huncdeus had arrived from England in 896 and quickly been reinforced, this force 'moved out as far as the Meuse in search of loot, without meeting any resistance from anyone. The King's army did in fact run into them as they were returning from pillaging, but achieved nothing. Even so, when the Northmen got back to their ships, they were afraid that such a numerous army would blockade them, and so went back to the Seine, where they remained for the whole of the summer, busy looting, without anyone offering them any resistance. But Charles had Huncdeus brought to him, and lifted him from the baptismal font in the monastery of Denain at Easter' (*AV* 897: ed. von Simson, p. 78; trans. Coupland). Thus, this trip to the Meuse could also have been an occasion during which some of Gareth Williams's 'Netherlands' Carolingian coins could have been obtained.

[4] *AV* 900: ed. von Simson, p. 81; trans. Coupland.

[5] That is Robert 'the Great' who was the brother of King Odo and son of Robert the Strong.

[6] Richard the Justiciar, duke of Burgundy.

[7] Herbert I, Count of Vermandois.

[8] *AV* 900: ed. von Simson, p. 82; trans. Coupland.

[9] See for example J. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IXe siècle'; *idem*, 'The fate of the ports of the lower Seine Valley at the end of the ninth century', in T. Pestell and K. Ulmschneider (eds.), *Markets in early medieval Europe - Trading and 'productive' sites, 650-850* (Bollington, 2003), pp. 234-47; *idem*, 'Les premières installations normandes dans la basse vallée de la Seine (fin du IXe siècle)', in A.-M. Flambard Héricher (ed.), *La progression des Vikings, des raids à la colonisation* (Caen, 2003), pp. 153-69.

ended up being buried on the Ribble in Lancashire in about 905, and indeed in the company of so many other Carolingian coins coming, there can be no doubt, either from the stay of these *same* Northmen on the Loire/in Aquitaine in 897 to 898 and/or from the attack on Tours in 903?

This opens up the possible conjecture that sometime after 900 some or all of these Northmen in the north of France then went to the Loire and helped attack Tours in 903, and that perhaps it was these same Northmen, perhaps combined with others under the chieftain Baret, who thereafter then moved on to/back to the Irish Sea zone, as was suggested earlier. Given what has been said already about 'Baret' and 'Heric' at Tours in 903, with the former clearly connected in some way with the Northmen of the Irish Sea zone, then it is not inconceivable that perhaps Heric was a leader from the north of France (in about 898-900) who had then moved to the Loire at some point thereafter and joined with Baret. To anticipate the argument a little, C. Etchingham asks: 'Could Tours in 903 [...] suggest a real example of [...] coalescence, between a "Norwegian-Irish"-led element and a "Danish" one.'[1]

In summary thus far, the examination of the two large groups of about 1,000 Carolingian coins found in the Cuerdale hoard hailing from western France/the Loire and from the Low Countries adds some very interesting information regarding the possible connections and movements of Scandinavian fleets in the years immediately before the turn of the century and in the years thereafter. The coins obtained in the Low Countries can only have been collected during the period 898 to *c*.900 by the fleet of Huncdeus coming from England in 896 and/or the substantial reinforcements which arrived not long afterwards. It was these Northmen who then spent the winter on the Loire over the winter of 897 to 898, when and where some of the coins in the Cuerdale hoard from the western Frankish realm may have been collected, before returning to the north of Francia. So, at some point shortly after about 900 some or all of the Northmen involved must have ended up in the Irish Sea zone before about 905.[2]

Regarding the attack on Tours in 903 it has been argued that at least the fleet led by Baret was likely part of the post-902 Dublin diaspora and that it is possible that it was during this raid that at least some of the western Frankish Carolingian coins buried at Cuerdale were collected. If so, this opens up the possibility that Heric might have joined Baret on the Loire in or just before 903 and that it was such a combination that had brought all the Cuerdale Carolingian coins together. On the other hand, as Alex Woolf suggests, it is likely that some Dublin-based

[1] Personal communication.

[2] Of course, how, by whom and for what purpose the Cuerdale hoard was assembled is still the subject of lively scholarly debate. With regard to the 'Netherlands-derived' Carolingian coins these either arrived in north-western England via the Irish Sea, or, perhaps less likely but still possible, via Northumbrian York.

forces were already making attacks on the British mainland 'since at least 900 and possibly for some years before'.[1] If Baret originally came from Ireland, which I think he could well have done, then it is not impossible that he too had starting raiding elsewhere before the Dublin expulsion of 902, maybe even before 900.

Overall, what has been attempted so far has been to highlight a number of historical, onomastic and numismatic points, or dots, and explore how these dots might perhaps be connected. Some of these connections are rather clear, others remain and will probably continue to remain obscure.

But we need to examine some other very pertinent evidence from the early tenth-century bishop of Utrecht in the Low Countries, Radbod, concerning the attack on Tours in 903.

Bishop Radbod of Utrecht

We can now turn to the second and very different source for the attack on Tours in 903: three works of Bishop Radbod of Utrecht (d. 917).

Radbod was probably born into a well-to-do Frankish family in the Lommegouw, near Namur in present-day Belgium, in about 850 or shortly thereafter.[2] His tenth-century *Life* says that his mother was a direct descendant of the famous eighth-century Frisian king Radbod. After an early education at home, he went to study at the cathedral school at Cologne where his uncle Günther was archbishop. Günther seems to have fallen into disgrace in about 863 because of his support for Lothar II during the latter's long-running and acrimonious divorce from his wife Theutberga.[3] At the suggestion of his parents Radbod then moved to study at Charles the Bald's court school in West Francia under the philosophers Manno and John Scotus Eriugena. After Charles's death in 877, Radbod most likely then moved to the collegiate church of Saint-Martin at Tours where Alcuin had founded a school for Charles the Bald's grandfather Charlemagne. Radbod was under the supervision of the abbot Hugh and he probably became a Benedictine canon at Tours and stayed there until 899 when on Bishop Odilbald's death he was appointed bishop of Utrecht with the approval of the East Frankish emperor Arnulf.[4] He was consecrated as bishop in the first half of 900. However, because of

[1] A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, p. 133.
[2] All the information on Bishop Radbod that follows is taken from *Vita Radbodi. The life of St Radboud*, eds. and trans. P. Nissen and V. Hunink (Nijmegen, 2004), and A. G. Weiler, 'Sint Radboud, bisschop van Utrecht [Deventer] van 899/900 tot 917. Pastor, geleerde, historicus, dichter en componist', *Trajecta, tijdschrift voor geschiedenis van het katholiek leven in Nederland,* 12 (2003), pp. 97-115.
[3] For Lothar's divorce see K. Heidecker, *The Divorce of Lothar II. Christian Marriage and Political Power in the Carolingian World*, trans. T. M. Guest (Ithaca and London, 2010).
[4] *Vita Radbodi*, ed. and trans. Nissen and Hunink, pp. 20-21.

an earlier Scandinavian attack on Utrecht Radbod was not able to take up his residence in Utrecht itself, which had been abandoned, but instead took his seat further east at Deventer on the Ijssel, to where his predecessor Odilbald had moved in (or before) 895.[1]

The prevailing scholarly idea is that Utrecht had been abandoned as the episcopal seat of Frisia after a purported Scandinavian attack in 857,[2] and that Bishop Hunger then retreated first to Odilienberg near to Roermond and then later to Deventer.[3]

But and moving on, Radbod lamented the fact that he could only visit Utrecht 'in times of peace' and that 'circumstances would not allow him to live there uninterruptedly'.[4] Radbod was an evangelising and itinerant bishop among the Frisians and he had several dangerous personal encounters with Scandinavian raiders in Frisia and in Utrecht. Once while 'making his rounds' in Frisia 'he was stopped by a Viking [*Danorum*] expedition [...]. Perilous as it was, he intrepidly and readily spoke salutary words to them [...] they kept blocking his way and threatening him with death'.[5] In Utrecht on some of his visits there Radbod also 'often

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[1] *Ibid*., pp. 40-41: 'Episcopali uero sede Danorum persecucione Traiecto desolata, Dauentrie sedem ipsius elegit, Traiectensis non immemor sedis, quam corde iugiter inhabitauit. Quam cum sepe temporis oportunitate, data pace, uiseret, tamen assidue secum cum suis doluit, quod ibidem tempus et res se inpretermisse uiuere non sineret', 'As the episcopal see of Utrecht had been abandoned because of a raid by the Vikings, Radboud established his see in Deventer. Yet he did not forget the see of Utrecht, where he continued to live in his heart. Whenever the occasion arose, in times of peace, he visited the place, and together with his people he continually regretted that time and circumstances would not allow him to live there uninterruptedly.' For the circumstances of Odilbald's move to Deventer compare in the first instance K. van Vliet, 'Traiecti muros heu! The Bishop of Utrecht during and after the Viking Invasions of Frisia (834-925)', in R. Simek and U. Engel (eds.), *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent research on early medieval relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia* (Vienna, 2004), pp. 147-49; L. van der Tuuk, 'Gingen de Utrechtse bisschoppen Hunger, Odilbald en Radbod vanwege de Noormannen in ballingschap?', *Jaarboek Oud Utrecht* (2003), pp. 34-66, at pp. 52-59.

[2] See W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 159. The evidence for this attack in 857 is highly debatable to say the least; I touched on it briefly in an earlier chapter.

[3] *Ibid*., Vogel; K. van Vliet, 'Traiecti muros heu!', pp. 140-41; B. Päffgen, 'Urban settlements and sacral topography in the Rhineland at the time of the Viking raids', in R. Simek and U. Engel (eds.), *Vikings on the Rhine*, pp. 83-110, at pp. 84-85. The attack on Utrecht reported *s.a.* 881 in *the Annals of Fulda* (cf. *AF* 881: trans. Reuter, p. 90) is interpreted by K. van Vliet (*ibid*., p. 142) as meaning the *refugium* of the bishop of Utrecht at Odilienberg was attacked, which is purely based on the idea of an earlier abandonment of Utrecht by Unger in 857. For an interesting potential corrective to this see L. van der Tuuk, 'Gingen de Utrechtse bisschoppen'.

[4] *Vita Radbodi. The life of St Radboud*, eds. and trans. Nissen and Hunink, pp. 40-41.

[5] *Ibid*., pp. 46-47: 'Quodam autem tempore commissi gregis ouile circuiens, dum Fresonum tendere pergit in partes, quo antiqui erroris radices, sicubi emergerent, spirituali uomere dirueret fideique documentis corda fidelium irrigaret, Danorum impeditur cursu. Qui mox, non mortis periculo territus, eis monita salutis intulit, quod, errore postposito, uiam ueritatis arriperent, et ne a Christi famulatu eorum arceretur obstaculo, si forsan ei nollent credere. Illis autem indurati cordis malicia insistentibus eique penam mortis minitantibus - nec sanctus gladio cederet, si tempus non denegaret - anathematis ulcionem non distulit. Quod et factum est; et plaga miserabilis eos subsequitur. Nam subito quasi fulminis ictu execrabili peste percussi, pariter omnes ferme mortui sunt', 'One day, doing his rounds in the sheepfold of the flock entrusted to him, he set off for the region of the Frisians in order to destroy with his spiritual plough any roots of the old error that might be shooting and to irrigate the hearts of the faithful with the proofs of faith. On that occasion he was stopped by a Viking expedition. Perilous as it was, he intrepidly and readily spoke salutary words to them: they had better abandon their error and follow the path of truth. And would they not believe him? In that case, they ought not to stop him and obstruct his service to Christ! As in the wickedness of their hardened hearts they kept blocking his way and threatening him with death - and the holy man would not have yielded before the sword, had time not pressed - he did not hesitate to resort to the weapon of

suffered at the hands of the Vikings'.[1] Radbod died at the end of 917 at Ootmarsum, from where he was carried to Deventer and buried.

But the question is which Northmen were installed in Frisia and at Utrecht or making 'expeditions' there in the years after Radbod's inauguration as bishop of Utrecht in 900? Were they those whom we lose track of in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* in 900, or had they come from elsewhere at a later date?

I am not sure we will ever know the answer to this question. But Radbod was a prolific writer and poet and of most interest for our present purpose are three of the works he wrote whilst based at Deventer in the years immediately following the attack on Tours in 903.

First is his *Miracle of Saint Martin*.[2] After a preamble on earlier miracles performed by Saint Martin at Tours, Radbod turns in sections 4 to 6 to the coming of the Northmen to France, culminating over sixty years later in the attack on Tours.[3] I will quote these three sections in full because it is one of only two contemporary or near contemporary accounts of the attack and because, as far as I am aware, no English translation yet exists.[4] Section 4 starts as follows:

> Danes and Sueves, whom the Teutons[5] call in their language Northmen, that is northern men ('Dani Suevique quos Theotisci lingua sua Northmani,[6] id est aquilonales homines appellant'), afterwards devastated the Gallic provinces to such an extent that where once the richest estates and most splendid towns had been, now there are the desert habitations of beasts and birds, and where once there flourished a rich crop of greenish paradises, now on the contrary
>
> Thistle and 'Christ's thorn' grows with sharp thorns[7]
>
> For this was the result of the depredation by the aforementioned people, which, in the same year, they say, when four kings, progeny of the same father, delivering battles

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anathema, with all its consequences: they fell victim to a terrible blow. For suddenly, as if by lightning, they were smitten with abominable ailments and nearly all lost their lives.'

[1] *Ibid*., pp. 46-47: 'Quos et sepe dum Traiecto patitur infestos, numquam impune reuersi sunt ab eo. Nam quod Dei iudicium eos ad calcem insequatur, ilico testati sunt et ipsi persepe paucissimi, qui uitam pro preda gauisi sunt inde reducere', 'In Utrecht, too, Radboud often suffered at the hands of the Vikings, but they never returned from him unpunished. For divine vengeance was close on their heels, as they themselves testified at the time, those few who were lucky to escape with their lives as spoils.'

[2] Radbod, *Libellus de Miraculo S. Martini*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 2 (Hanover, 1888), pp. 1239-44. Holder-Egger consulted all the manuscripts of Radbod's *Miracle of Saint Martin* held in Paris.

[3] *Ibid*., pp. 1242-43.

[4] I would like to thank Vincent Hunink and Colmán Etchingham for kindly undertaking the translations of Radbod's works used here.

[5] This means the Franks.

[6] Variants: *Northmani*, *Northmannos*

[7] Virgil, *Eclogues*, 5,39

> among themselves with their armies, polluted the plains of Fontenoy (*Fontanidos*) with much Christian blood, had entered the basin of the river Seine with their pirate-like fleet. How many slaughters of Gauls they committed after that day, how many towns and regions they burned down, is something horrible to write and pitiable to relate. I believe moreover that it was by divine approval that this happened to sinners, lest the people of those places, having become fat due to the great richness of the soil and having become stuffed full of transitory things to the point of nausea, would 'kick back' according to the prophecy and serve creation more than its Creator, who is blessed through the ages.

Here Radbod is describing the many Scandinavian raids along the Seine and Loire in the decades following the battle at Fontenoy-en-Puisaye on 25 June 841, a year which also witnessed, as Radbod rightly says, the first raid up the Seine - led by a chieftain called Oskar (*Oscherus/Hoserus*). Radbod mentions the four kings who fought at Fontenoy without giving their names. They were, as he would have well known, Louis the Pious's three sons Lothar I, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, plus their nephew Pippin II of Aquitaine; later copiers of Radbod filled in these names. I will explore Radbod's 'Danes and Sueves' (*Dani Suevique*) later. After his brief historical résumé Radbod then says: 'We leave to regular songs of mourning the truly dire calamities of mortals, which there is no doubt that the inhabitants of Gaul suffered, and we call back our pen to previous [that is in his own day] affairs.' In section 5 he goes on to describe at length the attack on Tours in 903:

> When then for sixty or more years the aforementioned fleet of the Danes had filled up with ships betimes the banks of the Loire, betimes of the Seine, betimes of both rivers, at last in our days it experienced of what merit the most blessed Martin was before God. For when once upon a time, the estates between those two rivers having been devastated, they could not find what further to plunder in the nearby region, they collected at once an abundance of arms, intending to plunder whatever was more distantly located. First, they headed for the country of Tours, and they destroyed everything they could find in the suburbs of the town, having first made a pitiable slaughter of people. Hearing of this the people of Tours began to fear, to flock together and to report the arrival of the enemy to each other. Then, as needed to be done, they did not cease to fasten the gates, to place themselves within towers, and to weapon bulwarks with shields and other equipment of arms. When they were still just a few, they discerned a multitude of Danes making attack, rushing up to the wall, and being determined to enter the town with full force. Being

> themselves now desperate, they decided as a last resort that salvation was to be sought not in human forces but rather in the help of God and the intervention of Saint Martin. So as a few weaponed/armed men (who had nonetheless willingly opposed death) were fighting at the bulwarks, the clergy there present, with all weaker persons lining up with them, with quick pace hastened to the church and stood all around the tomb of their defender, greatly beaten down by fear and anguish. With the elderly sighing, the boys wailing and the women lamenting, they cried out together: 'O Martin saint of God, why do you sleep so heavily? Why does it not please you to be wakeful to our affliction? Lo we are to be delivered to pagans; lo we are to be brought away as captives, provided anyone will escape the blows of the swords. And you do as if you do not know all this! Show us pity, we ask, help and bring assistance to the pitiable. You who have earlier performed many wonders for foreigners, at least perform one for your own men, that you may free us, otherwise we will be lost and your city will be reduced to a wilderness.

Section 6 tells of the salvation of Tours when the 'sacred relics' of Saint Martin were brought from his tomb, which reanimated the defenders of Tours to take courage and fight harder:

> These acclamations having been made thus dolefully, they immediately took from his tomb a small chest in which the most sacred relics of Martin were preserved, and with lamentation and tears that would move even angels to compassion, they carried it into the town gate, which was already battered by the great whirlwind of the enemy. Then truly the townsfolk directed their hands to the heavens, their souls towards divine clemency: they who shortly before had been frightened by fear of nearby death (as they believed it was), were now animated by the presence of such great assistance and resumed both strength of body and courage of the soul. A powerful stupor, by contrast, overcame the Danes, and after this stupor an intolerable terror, and after this terror, as many assert, loss of mind. I imagine seeing the pitiable creatures: first trembling, then trying to flee and in this attempt getting carried around straight away in a ridiculous turn; then as they get entangled in each other (one being impeded by the other) falling headlong down as if they were running on ice, and providing a show to the audience. They made it clear to understand how much havoc was caused to them by the mines which the clergymen had brought to the spot in order to avert the dangers. Consequently, the townsfolk, discerning that Christ himself was favourably disposed to them by the prayers of Martin, having issued out, pursued the enemies, of whom they slew almost nine hundred, roaming everywhere through the fields and badly hiding in groves. After taking the spoils, they

quickly re-entered the town, loudly praising and glorifying the mercy of God that gave them the unexpected palm of victory. Then immediately they restored the body of blessed Martin to its place, giving the highest thanks that he had helped them very impressively with his most excellent intervention.

What is remarkable about Radbod's telling of the siege and attack on Tours is how limited the miraculous element is. All that the bringing of Saint Martin's bones seems to have done is embolden the defenders to fight harder. The rest is a history of the attack and the victory of the defenders. While recognising that he is in God's service in the diocese of Utrecht and that Tours is far away, in section 7 Radbod goes to great lengths to reassure his 'fraternal' readers that he has tried to avoid any historical errors and that he has only reported what is certain, information, he says, he got from illustrious eyewitnesses, people worthy of belief. The only things he tells his audience that are uncertain are regarding the first advent of the Danes in Gaul, the loss of mind (*insania*) of the Danes and the number of them killed at Tours; these things, he says, he can neither confirm nor deny but he has followed the opinion of others. But regarding the facts of the attack on Tours and its salvation, Radbod is insistent that of all this there can be no doubt, based as it is on reliable eyewitness testimony.

From whom did Radbod hear of the facts of the siege and attack on Tours? In my opinion there can be little doubt that these would have been his former colleagues, the canons of Tours, most likely in written form, probably delivered by an intermediary. Radbod's informant might have been Archanaldus who from 895 to 930 composed and wrote most of the charters and other correspondence of the chapter of Tours. From 904 Archanaldus was the master of the school at Tours (*primus scolae*). But one or more of the other canons of Tours at this time, many of whose names are known, might also have been Radbod's informant(s).[1]

We know that in order to seek confirmations of the exemptions and privileges of the chapter the abbot and canons of Tours wrote about the Northmen's attack in 903 to both the King and the Pope, as did the Archbishop of Tours.[2] The chapter was also trying to raise money to 'restore and fortify their church'. In 906 the canons received a reply to their earlier letters to Alfonso III, the king of León, Galicia and Asturias (*c*.848-910). Alfonso wrote that he is grieved to learn of the recent attack by the 'Northmen' during which Saint Martin's church was burned, 'but he

[1] See, for example, *La pancarte noire*, ed. É. Mabille, p. 16; P. Gasnault, 'Les actes privés de l'abbaye de Saint-Martin de Tours du VIIIe au XIIe siècle', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 112 (1954), pp. 24-66, at pp. 27-28.

[2] See, for example, *La pancarte noire*, ed. É. Mabille, no. 137, p. 141, and pp. 30-31, 110, 121; P. Gasnault, 'Les actes privés', pp. 27, 37-38, 55-63.

rejoices to hear of the work going ahead at Tours to restore and fortify the church; is comforted too, by the news of the miracles worked at St Martin's shrine'.[1] In order to raise money for this rebuilding the monks had again offered to sell Alfonso an imperial crown in their possession made of gold and precious stones. Alfonso replies that he is willing and grateful to buy it and that his ships would come to Bordeaux soon, and he asks the canons to send envoys to bring the crown there - where they would be well rewarded. He also asks the canons to send him any written accounts of the posthumous miracles of Saint Martin because he only possesses an account of the miracles worked during the saint's lifetime.[2] Thus the canons of Tours wrote letters about the attack of 903 and about the miracle performed by Saint Martin, it is quite possible they wrote to Radbod as well.

But what did Radbod mean by *Dani Suevique*, Danes and Sueves? At first sight these were, according to him, two distinct types of men of the North whom the Franks called 'Northmen'. In Holder-Egger's edition of the *Miracle* the spelling *Dani Suevique* is clear and all later chroniclers who borrowed directly from Radbod used the same spelling, and thus it seems unlikely that Holder-Egger had transcribed it incorrectly. Interestingly there were still Sueves in the Low Countries in Bishop Radbod's times - in Antwerp and Courtrai and the surrounding area of Flanders. Under the year 880 the *Annals of Saint-Vaast*, written at Arras, say:

> the Northmen or Danes changed their base camp, and in the month of October built a stronghold for the winter at Courtrai. And from there they wiped the Menapians and Suevians (*Suevi*) right off the face of the earth, since they were so very hostile towards them.[3]

These Sueves had clearly been settled in this area for a long time because the second book of the seventh-century *Life of Saint Eligius* mentions them twice in exactly the same area:

> With the care of a solicitous pastor, he [Eligius] cast his eye over the towns or *municipia* committed to him and their surroundings. But in Flanders (*sed Flanderenses* = the Flemish) and Antwerp (*Andoverpenses* = men of Antwerp), Frisians (*Fresiones*) and

[1] R. Fletcher, *St. James's Catapult: The Life and Times of Diego Gelmírez of Santiago de Compostella* (Oxford, 1984), p. 317.
[2] *Ibid*. For the Latin text of this most interesting letter see A. López Ferreiro, *Historia de la Santa a. m. iglesia de Santiago de Compostela*, vol. 2 (Santiago, 1899), app. xxvii, pp. 57-60. See also *La pancarte noire*, ed. É. Mabille, no. 90, p. 112. For the authenticity of Alfonso's letter see R. Fletcher, *St. James's Catapult*, pp. 317-23. The refortification of the church and town of Tours was completed before 918; see for example: *La pancarte noire*, ed. É. Mabille, no. 3, p. 54; É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 191; P. Gasnault, 'Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes', p. 64.
[3] *AV* 880: ed. von Simson, p. 47; trans. Coupland.

Sueves (*Suevi*) and other barbarians coming from the seacoasts or distant lands not yet broken by the plow, received him with hostile spirits and averse minds.

Beyond this he laboured much in Flanders. He joined the struggle at Antwerp where he converted many erroneous Sueves; with apostolic authority.[1]

This seeming remnant of the ancient northern 'Suevic' people living in the Low Countries as late as the late ninth century is fascinating in itself, but although much more can be said I cannot explore it further in this study.

Yet Radbod's *Suevi* cannot have been these Sueves. According to the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* the Sueves in and around Antwerp and Courtrai were clearly 'very hostile' towards the Northmen and had been slaughtered by them. In addition, although the original Sueves described in Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars* and by Tacitus and other writers were a northern people, by the early tenth century while some of their descendants still lived on in northern Spain and in Swabia those surviving in Flanders could never be described by Radbod, or by the Franks in general, as 'Northmen'.

I suggest that Radbod actually meant Swedes (*Sueni/Sueones*) not Sueves (*Suevi*) in the term *Dani Suevique*. Radbod wrote that he was not sure regarding his report of the first advent of the Danes in Gaul and that he had followed the opinion of others. Yet whatever the truth of the spelling *Suevi* in the *Miracle of Saint Martin* in two of his other works also telling of the attack on Tours in 903 Radbod repeatedly mentions both Danes (*Dani*) and Swedes (*Sueni/Sveni*). This is astonishing in itself but it also adds credence to the view that Radbod had meant Swedes and not Sueves in his *Miracle of St Martin*. In a long poem called *Metrum anapaesticum ypercatalectum de eodem miraculo*, Radbod describes the attack on Tours and, of course, how it was saved by Saint Martin.[2] In strophe 9 we read:

Haec iussa deinde sequuntur
Boreae de parte Sueni,
Quos praescia carmina vatum
Quondam cecinere futuros

[1] J. A. McNamara, 'The Life of St. Eligius, 588-660', in T. Head (ed.), *Medieval Hagiography: A Sourcebook* (New York, 2000), book 2, chaps. 3 and 8; for the Latin original see *Vita S. Eligius*, ed. W. Levison, *MGH*, *SRM*, 4 (Hanover, 1902), pp. 669-742, at pp. 696, 700.
[2] Radbod, *Carmina*, ed. P. von Winterfeld, *MGH*, *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, 4. 1 (Berlin, 1899), pp. 160-173, at p. 165.

There had been some kind of prescient prophecy of an invasion by 'Swedes' from northern parts.[1] Having mentioned Swedes for the first time, in strophe 10 Radbod then seems to need to explain who these particular Northmen were:

Vocitans hos Francia Danos
Patrio cognomine dicit
Svenos, et in arte duelli
Nimium pro tempore gnaros

This literally means 'Francia, calling them Danes, names them with their fatherly name as Swedes (*Sueni*)'.[2] In addition these Swedes were very skilled in the art of fighting. This strophe may either mean Francia calls them both 'Danes' and 'Swedes', or '*Dani Sueni*' (both as one name, with *Sueni* as the second part of the name, so meaning perhaps 'Swedish Danes').[3] In my opinion this 'fatherly name' (*patrio cognomine*) of the *Sueni*/Swedes only makes sense if it refers to some type of origin, homeland or indeed fatherland; in fact, the noun *patria* literally means fatherland and thus also here ancestral, hereditary etc. In addition, Frankish writers in the ninth and tenth centuries always called Scandinavian raiders either Danes or Northmen, or both, and nowhere else are they ever referred to as *Sueni*/Swedes, a fact which might suggest that Radbod is not referring to Northmen in general, who the Franks certainly sometimes called Danes, but to a specific group of Northmen called Swedes or Swedish Danes.

In strophe 17 we read of how fierce 'Danes' using their ships as fortresses had laid waste many places along the Seine and the Loire, as Radbod had said in his *Miracle*:

Porro, ut redeamus ad orsa,
Danus ferus omnia vastat,
Sequanae et Ligerisque per amnes
Classim quasi castra coaptans

There then follow several strophes describing how the Danes, as they are now called on several occasions, came to Tours, mounted their attack and how the miracle of Saint Martin happened.

[1] This is a reference to Jeremiah's famous prophecy: 'From the north evil will spread out over all who will dwell in the land.'
[2] I thank Vincent Hunink for this translation. In personal correspondence J. M. van Winter says: 'It doesn't mean that the Franks call these people Danes, although they after their fatherland are Swedes, but that the Franks call these people Swedes after their fatherland, when they refer to these Danes: "Francia referring to these Danes, calls them after their fatherlandish name Swedes."'
[3] Vincent Hunink in personal correspondence.

Given that Radbod was a Frank and given that in strophe 10 he had said that 'Swedes' was the 'fatherly name' or the name of the fatherland of these Danes, it might be suggested that he is still referring to his Swedes, although this is not certain and it may just mean 'Danes' or Northmen in general. But in strophe 34 Radbod explicitly mentions Swedes again without any mention at all of 'Danes':

> O mira potentia Christi!
> Meritis o macte sacerdos!
> Rutila non casside pugnas
> Nec proteris ense Suenos

Radbod is telling his public to witness the marvellous power of Christ and of the humble priest Saint Martin in defeating the Northmen at Tours. He then says 'you do not fight with a red helmet, and you do not crush the Swedes (*Sueni*) with your sword'. A point reinforced in the next strophe which says that Martin defeats them not with weapons but by merely being there, in the form of his remains.

Radbod also wrote a third work celebrating Saint Martin's miracle at Tours in the form of a liturgy of hours called *In Translatione Sancti Martini Episcopi*.[1] After the initial offices concerning Saint Martin, in the third nocturne after some initial antiphons we find the first response:

> Responsorium: Cum clamor iniquitatis Gallorum ascendisset ad celum, Dani et Sueni collectis armatorum copiis Turonensium civitati applicuerunt.

The Danes and Swedes had now collected their forces together and turned their attention to Tours:

> Versus: Gente Gallorum ad peccata nimium proclivi et propter hoc imminente super eam Dei vindicta Dani et Sueni collectis armatorium copiis Turonensium civitati applicuerunt.

As was often the case, in the eyes of clerics and monks this attack by the Danes and Swedes had been brought on the people of Gaul by their own sins. The office continues with the people of Tours crying out for Saint Martin to help them - as described in more detail in the *Miracle*.

[1] Radbod, *Carmina*, p. 164.

The third nocturne ends with the response:

> Responsorum: His ita flebiliter conclamatis surgens bellator invictus contrivit Danos et Suenos. Turonici autem pro data victoria omnes simul una voce dederunt gloriam deo.

The Danes and the Swedes were defeated by the 'invincible warrior' (Saint Martin), and the people of Tours with one voice gave glory to God for their victory. This repeated mention of *Dani et Sueni* might suggest that the reference to 'Danes' and 'Swedes' in strophe 10 of Radbod's poem could indeed mean Danes and Swedes rather than Swedish Danes; but whatever the case on the surface it does seem clear that Radbod is suggesting the involvement of some Northmen with Swedish connections or background in the attack on Tours.

The three works of Bishop Radbod discussed thus far were all primarily concerned with the attack on Tours, and with the miracle of Saint Martin that happened there. As mentioned earlier, Radbod had probably spent some decades at the collegiate church of Saint-Martin at Tours before becoming bishop of Utrecht. Later chroniclers at both Tours and elsewhere reproduced parts of Radbod's *Miracle* almost *verbatim*, including the phrase *Dani* and *Suevi*. Pierre Béchin, who was a canon at Tours and who wrote the first of the so-called 'Chronicles of Tours', called *Chronicon Petri Filii Bechini*, in about 1138-1154, copied almost word for word from Radbod in terms of the *Dani* and *Suevi*, plus the sixty years of devastation caused by these Northmen on the Seine and Loire after the battle of Fontenoy in 841, to which he adds the names of the four kings involved, Lothar, Louis, Charles and Pippin II, which Radbod did not.[1] We also find the same borrowing in the *Brevis Historia Sancti Juliani Turonensis*.[2] The early twelfth-century *Liber de Compositione castri Ambaziae* from Amboise on the Loire calls them *Dacis et Suevis*.[3]

It could be suggested that these later chroniclers got their information on the *Dani* and *Suevi* and the attack on Tours from a now lost original tenth-century source held at Tours and it was from this source that Radbod derived his eyewitness information. This is possible, but telling against it is the fact that the *Liber de Compositione* not only uses many phrases found in Radbod's *Miracle* but, unlike with the case of Pierre Béchin, it also reproduces large extracts from Radbod's *In Translatione Sancti Martini Episcopi* which was certainly written while he was a bishop in the Low Countries. Thus, I agree with French scholars such as Mabille,

[1] *Chronicon Petri Filii Bechini*, in *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, p. 44.
[2] *Brevis Historia Sancti Juliani Turonensis*, in *Recueil de chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, p. 222.
[3] *Liber de Compositione castri Ambaziae*, in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, pp. 20-22; *Supplément aux Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, pp. 8-9.

Halphen, Poupardin, Salmon, Gasnault and others that these chroniclers took some of their information directly from a copy of Radbod's work(s) held at Tours in the early twelfth century.

Scandinavian ethnicity and identity in Frankish sources

Bishop Radbod would certainly have seen the so-called *Annals of Saint-Bertin* which report the battle of Fontenoy in June 841 as well as the arrival of 'Danish pirates' who had attacked up the Seine a few weeks before,[1] both of which he mentions. Radbod had studied at Charles the Bald's court school where Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, who followed Prudentius of Troyes in writing the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* after 861, had taught. It is quite possible, even likely, that Radbod could have met Hincmar whilst there. It is also almost certain that Radbod had or had read a copy of Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni* (*Life of Charlemagne*). Charles's court library where Radbod had studied certainly contained a copy.[2] In a passage in the *Vita Karoli* concerning the peoples living around the Baltic Sea Radbod could have read: 'Hunc multae circumsedent nationes; Dani siquidem ac Sueones, quos Nordmannos vocamus, et septentrionale litus et omnes in eo insulas tenent', 'The Danes and Swedes, whom we [the Franks] call Northmen, hold the northern shore and the islands along it'.[3] The phrase is surprisingly close to Radbod's 'Dani Suevique quos Theotisci lingua sua Northmani, id est aquilonares homines appellant'.[4] Could Einhard be the ultimate source for Radbod's *Dani Suevique*?

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[1] Cf. *AB* 841: ed. Grat, p. 39; trans. Nelson, p. 50.

[2] Cf. R. McKitterick, 'Charles the Bald (823-877) and his library: the patronage of learning', *English Historical Review*, 95 (1980), pp. 28-47.

[3] Einhard, *Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH*, *SRG*, 25 (Hanover, 1911), chap. 12, p. 15; *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious*, trans. Noble, p. 32.

[4] Later in the *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, Adam of Bremen says (trans. F. J. Tschan (New York, 2002) book 1, chap. xiv (15), p. 20): 'The Danes and the other peoples who live beyond Denmark are all called Northmen by the historians of the Franks', 'Nam Dani et ceteri, qui trans Daniam sunt, populi ab istoricus Francorum omnes Nordmanni vocantur' (*Adamus Bremensis, Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, book 1, chap. xiiii, p. 19). Adam certainly had a copy of Radbod's work and Einhard's *Vita Karoli*, as he tells us. Also, in William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* (*GND*, ed. and trans. E. van Houts, I, 4(5), pp. 16-17) after recapping the early history of the Danes and how they were originally Goths (equated invariably with *Getae* and *Getia*), which William gets from Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *De moribus* and ultimately derives from Jordanes's *Getica*, he continues by asking: 'Whether for this or for some other reason, the Danes are said to stem from the Goths.' In Robert of Torigni's later version of the *GND* just before this question Robert adds the following: 'Nortmanni autem dicuntur, quia eorum Boreas North uocatur, home uero man; inde Northmanni, id es homines boreales per denominationem nuncupantur' (*GND*, ed. and trans. E. van Houts, I, 3(4), pp. 16-17). I do not know whether Robert got this directly from Radbod or not; as seen above Radbod also uses the term *Boreas*, nevertheless the phrase is very similar to Radbod's. E. van Houts (*GND*, p. 16, n. 2) mentions that even earlier than Robert of Torigni the same etymology is found in William of Apulia's *Gesta Roberti Guiscardi*, ed. Mathieu, p. 98.

In an important study on the use of terms such as *Dani* and *Nordmanni* in Frankish discourse Ildar Garipzanov says that from Einhard's comment about *Dani* and *Sueones* who the Franks call *Nordmanni* it was not clear if the Northmen actually called themselves Danes and Swedes or if Einhard knew the names from earlier literature.[1] Garipzanov also mentions the frequent distinctions Rimbert made between the *gens Danorum* and the *gens Sueonum* in his *Vita Anskarii*, written between 869 and 876, saying that Rimbert followed Einhard in this. He asks whether Rimbert's distinctions between Danish and Swedish people really reflect 'the actual divisions in ninth-century Scandinavia or did he [Rimbert] simply apply in his hagiographical work an existing paradigm to describe ethnic division in Scandinavia?'[2] To this Garipzanov adds Prudentius's report in the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* of an embassy coming to Louis the Pious's court in 839 accompanied by 'some men who said that their *gens* were called *Rhos*'. Not knowing of such a people, the emperor Louis asked for investigations to be made which determined that they belonged to the *gens* of the Swedes, ('Quorum aduentus causum imperator diligentius inuestigans, comperit, eos gentis esse Sueonum'), which Garipzanov says 'undoubtedly proves the power of an established discourse over the Frankish perception of people living in the Nordic world'.[3] All this, and much more, Garipzanov, following Johannes Fried's 'gentile' model, uses to argue that there was a distorting power of Frankish ethnic discourse. In terms of Rimbert, I am of the opinion that he had a fairly good grasp of Scandinavian geography and of the peoples who lived there, some of whom were called Danes and Swedes. Additionally, with regard to the *Rhos* at Louis the Pious's court in 839 if *Dani* and *Sueones* were just confused ethnographic terms why after 'diligent investigations' was it found that they belonged to the Swedish people - which is in fact acknowledged to have been the case? Regarding this visit Janet Nelson says: 'The Swedes were well enough known to the Frankish court since the mission of St Anskar from 829 onwards.'[4] In regard to Radbod's various ethnographic terms, the term *Dani Suevique quos Theotisci lingua sua Northmani* (if this actually means Danes and Swedes as I have argued it does) does indeed rather smack of a prevailing Frankish 'ethnic discourse', whether Radbod took it directly from Einhard or from somewhere else. On the other hand, it is difficult to see how this quite fits with Radbod's use

[1] I. Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the *gens Danorum*', p. 116.
[2] *Ibid*., pp. 116-17. Garipzanov does not answer this question, but he refers to the fact that it was argued for by Johannes Fried; see J. Fried, '*Gens* und *regnum*: Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungskategorien politischen Wandels im frühen Mittelalter; Bemerkungen zur doppelten Theoriebindung des Historikers', in J. Miethke and K. Schreiner (eds.), *Sozialer Wandel im Mittelalter: Wahrnehmungsformen, Erklärungsmuster, Regelungsmechanismen* (Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 73-104, at pp. 86-87.
[3] *Ibid*., pp. 117-18. See *AB* 839: ed. Grat, pp. 30-31; trans. Nelson, p. 44.
[4] J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of Saint-Bertin*, p. 44, n. 7.

of the word 'Swedes' on its own on several occasions, not linked to any 'Danes', or why he seems to have to explain to his clerical 'brothers' that 'Francia, calling them Danes, names them with their fatherly name as Swedes', 'Vocitans hos Francia Danos Patrio cognomine dicit Svenos', which it has been suggested clearly implies a *patria* or fatherland. As noted earlier, Radbod had actually had some perilous encounters with some Scandinavians in Frisia and in Utrecht in the early tenth century - and spoken with them - might he not have got some ethnographic information from them? As a good Frank he might have generically called them *Dani* but, he was told, they called themselves Swedes.[1] Nevertheless, it could still be validly argued that we should not put much store in Radbod's 'Danes and Swedes' as giving us any real and meaningful ethnographic information about those Northmen who had attacked Tours in 903.

A Swedish dynasty in Denmark

Despite this necessary caution we might still ask if Radbod's Swedes, or Danes who called themselves Swedes, could have had any connection with the so-called 'Swedish Dynasty' which Adam of Bremen says had come to Denmark, probably in the years immediately before 900; not necessarily those who had attacked Tours but perhaps those Radbod had met in Frisia. Adam directly quotes what the Danish king Svein Estridsson (c. 1019-1074/6) had told him during one of their meetings:

> After the overthrow of the Northmen[2] […] I have learned that Norway was ruled by Helge [*Heilgo*], a man beloved of the people for his justice and sanctity, He was succeeded by Olaf [*Olaph*], who, coming from Sweden, obtained the Danish kingdom by force of arms, and he had many sons, of whom Chnuba and Gurd possessed the realm after their father's death' […] 'after Olaf, the Swedish prince [*Sueonum principem*] who ruled in Denmark with his sons, Sigerich [*Sigtrygg*] was put in his place. And after he had reigned for a short time, Harthacanute [*Hardegon*], the son of Svein, came from *Nortmannia* and deprived him of his kingdom.[3]

[1] The whole subject of whether 'Swedes' might have been involved in any numbers in the ninth- and early tenth-century raids in the West has rarely been explored. One rather flawed exception is W. Roos's article 'The Swedish Part in the Viking Expeditions', *The English Historical Review*, 7. 26 (1892), pp. 209-23.

[2] This 'overthrow of the Northmen' is quite explicitly referring to the Northmen's defeat by King Arnulf at Louvain on the River Dyle in 891 (see *AF s.a.* 891), which Adam had related immediately before. So 'Helge's' advent is being placed somewhat after this; when exactly we do not know.

[3] Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, trans. F. J. Tschan, book 1, chap. xlviii (50), p. 44 and chap. lii (54), p. 47; *Adamus Bremensis, Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, book 1, chap. xlviii, p. 48, chap. lii, p. 54. See also *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, chap. lvii (59), p. 50: 'Then

The historical veracity of what Svein told Adam, at least as it appertains to the names if not necessarily regarding ethnicity or origin, is confirmed by two rune stones in southern Jutland dating from the mid-tenth century. The first (DR 2) situated at Hedeby reads: *Asfriþr gærþi kumbl þøn æft Sigtryg, sun sin ok Gnupu* ('Ásfriðr made the memorial after Sigtrygg her son together with Gnupa'). The second (DR 4) found in Schleswig reads: *Asfriþr gærþi kumbl þøsi, dottiR Oþinkors, æft Sigtryg kunung, sun sin ok Gnupu. Gormʀ rest runaʀ* ('Ásfriðr made the memorial, the daughter of Odinkar, after King Sigtrygg, her son together with Gnupa. Gorm made the runes').[1] Gnupa is also mentioned in the Saxon Widukind of Corvey's 'Deeds of the Saxons' (*Res gestae Saxonicae*) written in about 967/68. Widukind says that after the Saxon king Henry the Fowler had subjugated the surrounding peoples, he invaded the Danes who had been attacking the Frisians in their ships. He defeated them, made them tributary and forced their king called Gnupa to be baptised and accept Christianity. He places these events in 934.[2] Also writing in the 960s, Adalbert of Magdeburg dates Chnupa's defeat and baptism to 931, as does Thietmar of Merseburg who calls Henry's opponent *Cnuto* (ON Knútr).[3] To cut a long story short, this supposed Swedish dynasty was eventually eclipsed by the mid-tenth century by the founders of the so-called Jelling dynasty under Harthacanute and his son Gorm 'the Old', who we are told by Adam had returned to Denmark from *Nortmannia*, sometime after 911.

Nowadays *Nortmannia* is sometimes considered, possibly rightly in my opinion, to mean 'Normandy' rather than Norway.[4]

For many years the Swedish origin of the dynasty of Olaf, Gnupa (Knútr?) and Sigerich/Sigtryggr was accepted as fact. Other archaeological and linguistic evidence was brought to bear to support this view. Niels Lund and others have since cast doubt on the Swedish

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he (Henry the Fowler) invaded Denmark and in the first battle so terrified King Gorm that the latter pledged himself to obey his commands and, as a suppliant, sue for peace.' For another examination of this matter in relation to the early 940s see S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine: The mystery of the pagan king Setric', *Northern History*, 55. 1 (2018), pp. 44-60.

[1] M. L. Nielsen, 'Swedish Influence in Danic Runic Inscriptions', in K. Düwel (ed.), *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde* (Berlin, 2000), pp. 127-47. Of course, it is likely that King Svein had seen these runestones but he must have got his information regarding a Swedish origin from elsewhere.

[2] *Widukindi Monachi Corbeiensis Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum Libri Tres*, *Die Sachsengeschichte des Widukind von Korvei,* eds. P. Hirsch and H.-E. Lohmann, *MGH*, *SRG*, 60 (Hanover, 1935), *s.a.* 934, book 1, p. 59.

[3] Adalbert of Magdeburg, in S. MacLean (ed. and trans.), *History and Politics*, p. 240; Thietmar of Merseburg, *Thietmari Chronicon*, ed. J. M. Lappenberg, in *Annales, chronica et historiae aevi Saxonici*, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 3 (Hanover, 1839), pp. 723-871, at book 1, p. 739. *Saxo Grammaticus*, *The History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, ed. H. E. Davidson, trans. P. Fisher (Cambridge, 1998), p. 294, names a nobleman *Ennignup* as having been guardian of a young king Knut at some time prior to king Gorm the Old; this is probably a representation of Gnupa.

[4] See for example A. Siegfried Dobat, 'Viking stranger-kings: the foreign as a source of power in Viking Age Scandinavia, or, why there was a peacock in the Gokstad ship burial?', *Early Medieval Europe*, 23 (2015), pp. 161-201, at pp. 171-74; B. and P. Sawyer, 'A Gormless History? The Jelling dynasty revisited', *Runica-Germanica Mediaevalia*, 37 (2003), pp. 689-706, at p. 690. This was earlier proposed by J. Steenstrup, *Danmarks Sydgrænse og Herredømmet over Holstein ved den Historiske tids begyndelse (800-1100)* (Copenhagen, 1900), p. 38.

dynasty thesis, particularly with regard to the supposed archaeological and linguistic evidence.[1] Nevertheless, Lund repeatedly states that although Olaf and Gnupa were probably not Swedish they were rather Danes who like many other powerful Danes before them had been exiled in Sweden before returning to Denmark.[2] To give just one example from Lund's works: 'A [Danish] dynasty that had spent some time in Sweden returned home and managed to establish itself for a couple of decades, only to be replaced by another dynasty returning from abroad.'[3]

The history and chronology of both the so-called Swedish dynasty and the arrival and origins of the later Jelling dynasty (the *Knýtlinga*) who ruled Denmark until the mid-eleventh century are very obscure and still much debated by historians. I have quoted Lund because he is perhaps the arch-sceptic on the question of the Swedish dynasty. But whether this dynasty which had established itself in southern Jutland at the end of the ninth century and during the first few decades of the tenth century was Swedish or comprised returning Danes who had been exiled in Sweden there was definitely some Swedish connection.

Radbod spent the last seventeen years of his life in his Frisian diocese, based at Deventer. We know from his *Vita* that he could only return to Utrecht when the absence of Scandinavian raiders allowed, a thing that was the source of much regret to him. We also know that on his travels among the Frisians, and in Utrecht on some of his rare visits there, he had actually met and been threatened by these raiders. Radbod's explicit statement in his poem that 'Vocitans hos Francia Danos patrio cognomine dicit Svenos […]', a statement that is not specifically related to Tours, does seem to hint at some first-hand knowledge. Who had told Radbod that these 'Danes' were called Swedes after their fatherland? Could he have got this information from his own encounters with the Northmen in Frisia and Utrecht in the early tenth century? If so, might not this provide some evidence for the 'Swedes' who had come to Denmark at this time, as told by the Danish king Svein Estridson to Adam of Bremen? We should remember that Widukind of Corvey said that before Henry the Fowler defeated Gnupa these 'Danes' had been attacking the Frisians, and Radbod's diocese of Utrecht was of course in Frisia. Could the

[1] See N. Lund, 'Svenskevaeldet i Hedeby', *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* (1980), pp. 114-25, which also gives references to some of the extensive 'Swedish Dynasty' literature.
[2] A view also held by Birgit and Peter Sawyer; see their 'A Gormless History?', p. 690
[3] N. Lund, 'The Danish Empire and the End of the Viking Age', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 156-81; *idem*, 'The Danish Empire', p. 158; *idem*, 'Scandinavia, c. 700-1066', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History* vol. 2*: c. 700-c. 900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 202-27, at p. 211; *idem*, 'Allies of God or man? The Viking expansion in a European perspective', *Viator*, 20 (1989), pp. 45-59, at p. 52.

Northmen Radbod met on more than one occasion have been Gnupa's or even Olaf's 'Swedes' from Denmark?[1]

In summary, it has been argued earlier that both Bárðr and Óttar were part of the diaspora after the Scandinavians were expelled from Dublin in 902, and that at least part of the force that attacked Tours came from, and ultimately returned to, Ireland. If this is correct where does that leave Bishop Radbod's Danes and Swedes? Certainly, if Bárðr and, possibly, Eiríkr had originally come from Ireland their description as either Danes or just Northmen in Frankish sources would be completely understandable. While there were differences between various groups of Scandinavians active in Ireland, for example between the early 'fair foreigners' and the, probably Danish, 'black/dark foreigners' who had first intruded into Ireland in the early 850s,[2] and it is quite possible, as Clare Downham suggests, that Óttar's family might have been an important part of these earlier established 'fair foreigners' who had often been in conflict with the so-called 'dynasty of Ívarr' in Dublin,[3] these distinctions would have not been known to the Franks for whom the terms Danes and/or Northmen usually sufficed. A coalition of Northmen of Irish origin at both Tours in 903 and in Brittany and England a little later is eminently understandable, particularly after the expulsion of the Scandinavians (or their elites) from Dublin in 902. Radbod's 'Swedes' at Tours might thus seem rather incongruous and out of place. Perhaps we must, therefore, discard Radbod's words and suggest that he, like other Franks before and after, was just using a 'distorted ethnic discourse' and that his 'Swedes' at Tours or elsewhere did not in fact represent any coherent ethnic or geographical group. This would be a valid position; as Peter Heather says in relation to another debate on ethnicity and identity: 'Academic historians specialise in disagreeing with each other: in many ways that is the whole point of the discipline.'[4]

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[1] An alternative to this is that Radbod had encountered Northmen coming from Neustria - particularly from the Seine, in what was to become Normandy - which, if so, would also be of extreme interest and not necessarily contradictory. W. Roos, 'The Swedish Part in the Viking Expeditions', even suggested a 'Swedish' origin for Rollo. This might at first glance seem a very wild theory given the long, acrimonious and still unresolved debate about whether Rollo was a 'Dane' or a 'Norwegian'.

[2] This is C. Etchingham's thesis, see for example his 'The location of historical Laithlinn/Lochla(i)nn' and 'Names for the Vikings in Irish Annals'. I agree with Etchingham's general view, but there were some other 'Danes' in Ireland in the early 860s and even in 870, for which see S. M. Lewis, 'Rodulf and Ubba'. In addition, and importantly, see the contemporary *Annals of Xanten s.a.* 870 [=871] which say that 'The heathen also laid waste almost all of Ireland and returned with many spoils, and they inflicted many woes upon the human race throughout the watery areas of Francia and Gaul': *AX* 870 [=871]: ed. von Simson, p. 30; trans. Coupland.

[3] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 25, 31.

[4] P. Heather, 'Ethnicity, Group Identity, and Social Status in the Migration Period', in I. Garipzanov, P. Geary, and P. Urbańczyk (eds.), *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs. Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe* (Turnhout, 2008), pp. 17-50, at p. 18.

Yet in my opinion Radbod clearly had some knowledge of certain Northmen who the Franks called Danes but whose 'fatherly name' was Swedes - or whose fatherland was Sweden. If this information was not from a distorted Frankish 'ethnic discourse' the most likely scenario for his acquisition of this knowledge was from some of the Scandinavians present in the Low Countries in the early tenth century, Northmen whom Radbod had meet personally during his time as a bishop in Frisia. Perhaps Radbod took his direct knowledge of these Scandinavians and just transported these 'Swedes' to Tours. Of course, this is speculation, but if so whilst it would not support any 'Swedish' presence at Tours it might be a small piece of evidence for the veracity of Adam of Bremen's Swedish dynasty established in southern Denmark in the last years of the ninth century and in the early tenth century. Finally, although this too is speculation, one could imagine a scenario where Bárðr from Ireland had joined forces with a chieftain called Eiríkr hailing, directly or indirectly, from 'Sweden', to attack Tours. There are many examples of different groups of Northmen combining to make a particularly hard raid or *chevauchée*, and trying to take the walled town of Tours would certainly have been seen as a hard nut to crack.

Colmán Etchingham who generally doubts the propensity of viking groups to 'coalesce and fragment' asks 'could Tours in 903 […] suggest a real example of such coalescence, between a "Norwegian-Irish"-led element and a "Danish" one that Radbod knew to be comprised partly of "Swedish exiles?"'[1] Regarding this view the Dutch historian Johanna Maria van Winter says: 'Why shouldn't there have been Swedes among the raiders of Tours in 903? I fully agree with (the) hypothesis that not only Danes from Ireland but also other exiled Danes and Swedes may have partaken in this expedition.'[2]

Neils Lund once pertinently wrote: 'That sources on which so much depends are so open to interpretation and reinterpretation is what makes the study of the Viking period so fascinating.'[3]

What might be worthwhile for future research is to look for any evidence for the involvement of larger groups of 'Swedes' raiding in the West, as well as the possible movements and origins of the different Scandinavian groups operating in northern Francia and the Low Countries in the early years of the tenth century, of which there were quite a few besides that belonging to Rollo.

[1] Personal communication.
[2] Personal communication.
[3] N. Lund, 'Allies of God or man?', p. 59.

Concluding comments

The whole history of the Northmen in France between 896 and about 913 has hitherto never been studied in its entirety. I hope the foregoing analysis in this chapter has at least, and even if only partially, started to address this question.

What is most abundantly clear is that the Northmen operating in the north of France and Brittany, in Aquitaine and in Burgundy during these years had many 'connections' with England and with the Irish Sea zone, both western Northumbria and Ireland itself. Although many things are still unclear regarding the precise chronology and the chieftains involved, this period is one of the clearest examples of how Scandinavian bands moved about from place to place, frequently crossing the Channel between France (including Brittany) and the British Isles, and between northern Francia and the Loire/Aquitaine.

Chapter 12

RAGENOLD, ROLLO AND OTHER NORTHMEN, *c*.919-925

This thesis is about the connections of the Northmen in Aquitaine, not simply what they did in Aquitaine - this or that raid or this or that battle. With the exception of the attack on Tours in 903 which was discussed in the previous chapter there had been no Scandinavian attacks into Aquitaine since the brief incursion over the winter of 897-98 made by Northmen who had recently arrived back in France following four years in England.

In terms of Brittany, the attack on the Breton monastery of Landévennec at the end of 913 was undertaken by Northmen who had probably originated in the British Isles and who certainly returned there immediately afterwards. This all changed in *c*.919 when a new and significant fleet of Northmen came to Brittany. These Northmen's subsequent attacks into Aquitaine proper, south of the Loire, only covered a short period in the early 920s and then again in the first half of the 930s. Most of their activities over a twenty-year period took place along the Loire, in Francia north of the Seine, in Neustria between the Seine and the Loire, and in Burgundy and Brittany. This makes this period a prime example of the very close connections between Northmen operating in Aquitaine, throughout France and even overseas, and a closer examination of all these connections than has hitherto been attempted is called for. This chapter and the following one will attempt to do just this. At the end of the day many things will still remain obscure, including where these Northmen had come from and what became of them after 939, but a number of other things will be illuminated.

Return to Brittany

In the first entry of his *Annals* under the year 919 Flodoard of Reims wrote: 'Nordmanni omnem Britanniam in cornu Galliae, in ora scilicet maritima sitam depopulantur, protereunt atque delent, abductis, venditis, ceterisque cunctis ejectis Brittonibus',[1] Hubert Guillotel translates this as follows: 'Les Normands ravagent, écrasent et ruinent toute la Bretagne située à l'extrémité de la Gaule, celle qui est en bordure de mer, les Bretons étant enlevés, vendus et autrement chassés en masse.'[2] Which is preferable to Fanning and Bachrach's: 'The Northmen

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 919, *Annales*, p. 1.
[2] H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle du pouvoir ducal breton (936-1040)', *Actes du 103e Congrès national des sociétés savantes (Nancy-Metz 1978)* (Paris, 1979), pp. 63-84, at p. 63; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 377.

ravaged, destroyed and annihilated all of Brittany in Cornouaille, which is located on the seashore.'[1] It is not impossible that these Northmen had arrived in the area a little before 919,[2] although it is highly doubtful that they had been established in semi-permanent bases in Brittany since the attack on Landévennec in 913.[3] Both Arthur de La Borderie and René Merlet[4] argue

[1] Flodoard, *s.a.* 919: *Annals*, p. 3. Some historians (and implicitly the English translation quoted here) have said that these means only the coasts of Cornouaille were ravaged (and later occupied) (cf. for example J. Lair, ed., *Dudo*, p. 69; H. Guillotel in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 377, 392). On the other hand, A. de La Borderie (*Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 355, 499) long ago argued a case that all the coast of Brittany was meant, pointing out that Flodoard here says 'all of Brittany' and 'all the Bretons' (*omnem Britanniam*; *cunctis ejectis Brittonibus*), and that in 921 these same Northmen, who were now on the Loire, are said by Flodoard to have ravaged 'Brittany', that is 'toute de Bretagne', beforehand. Regarding the term *cornu Galliae*, he says (p. 355): 'Si Flodoard avait voulu parler de Cornouaille, il eût écrit tout au moins, d'un mot, avec la terminaison de l'ablatif: *in Cornugallia* (le nom exact est *Cornubia*); mais *cornu Galliae* est tout différent et ne peut pas signifier qu'une chose : la corne, l'angle, l'extrémité de la Gaule – terme qui peint fort bien la situation et la configuration géographique de la péninsule bretonne à l'extrémité occidentale du continent gaulois.' H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', pp. 65-68, argues that Cornouaille/*Cornubia* and the term *Cornu Galliae* found in an eleventh-century *calendrier* of Landévennec (cf. 'Le premier siècle', p. 65 and n. 15) and the adjective *Cornugillensis*, said to be the *pays* where Landévennec was founded (cf. p. 65 and n. 16), mean that *Cornu Galliae* is the county of Poher, and basically the same as Cornouaille, cf. also J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 13. As support for this he also mentions (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 392; H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', p. 65 and n. 14, there is a typographical error here because in this note Guillotel refers to his previous notes 3 ad 5, it is clear that 3 and 7 are meant) that Flodoard uses the term *Cornu Galliae* twice, in 919 and 931, in connection with fights between Bretons and Northmen. But, Guillotel (in *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 392) rightly says regarding the meaning of *Cornu Galliae* in Flodoard's two reports that 'il serait imprudent de proposer une réponse trop absolue, car à cette époque les dénominations de certaines circonscriptions géographiques correspondent à une réalité en cours de changement, c'est le cas pour le terme *Francia*'. But ultimately, he plumps for the narrow definition of *Cornouaille* (*ibid.*). Whatever the case, it does seem to me that wanting to limit the activities in Brittany of these Northmen over the next decade or so to Cornouaille is a way (consciously or not) to clear the decks for the purported involvement of Northmen from the Seine in northern Brittany in the early 930s, an involvement that debatably never happened.

[2] Some scholars have suggested that Flodoard's original *Annals* may have started somewhat before 919. We can never be sure, but in my view the way the *Annals* as we have them start in 919 with a great hailstorm at Reims is highly peculiar. In addition, A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 364, and R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne* (1924), pp. 26-40, at pp. 28-29, both suggest that these Northmen first arrived in Nantes in 918, before they ravaged the coasts of Brittany in 919 (see the notes below). For a full discussion of the redaction of Flodoard's *Annals* see S. Lecouteux, 'Une reconstitution hypothétique du cheminement des Annales de Flodoard, depuis Reims jusqu'à Fécamp', *Tabularia*, 4 (2004), pp. 1-38; *idem*, 'Les Annales de Flodoard (919-966): une oeuvre complète ou lacunaire?', *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* (2007), pp. 181-209; *idem*, 'Le contexte de rédaction des Annales de Flodoard de Reims (919-966), Partie 1: une relecture critique du début des Annales à la lumière de travaux récents', *Le Moyen Âge,* 116/1 (2010), pp. 51-121; *idem*, 'Le contexte de rédaction des Annales de Flodoard de Reims (919-966), Partie 2: présentation des résultats de la relecture critique du début des Annales', *Le Moyen Âge*, 116/2 (2010), pp. 283-317.

[3] As seen in the previous chapter it is not the case as some historians (see for example J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 46; R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 82, n. 1; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, for example at p. 350; N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, pp. 40-42, - all in different ways) have maintained that there was a fleet or fleets raiding in Brittany for some years after the attack on Landévennec in 913. This idea is based on a misunderstanding of the chronology of events and what these particular Northmen did afterwards: they went 'back' to the British Isles.

[4] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 364: 'Après avoir pris Nantes […] les pirates n'y séjournèrent longtemps. Le torrent se précipita alors sur la Bretagne'; R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931', pp. 28-29.

that these Northmen first arrived in Nantes *before* they ravaged the coasts of Brittany in 919, they suggest in 918,[1] although it is possible that it was even slightly before this.

Immediately after telling of the return of a Scandinavian fleet from Brittany in 914,[2] the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says (in MSS A and D) that in 914-15: 'And then after that, in the same year before Martinmas,[3] King Edward [the Elder] went to Buckingham with his army and stayed there four weeks, and before he went from there made both of the strongholds on each side of the river. And Jarl Thurcytel (*þurcytel eorl*) sought him as his lord, and all the *holds*, and almost all the principal men who belonged to Bedford, and also many of those who belonged to Northampton.'[4] The next thing we hear of Jarl Thurcytel is in *c*.916 when the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says: 'Here in this year, before midsummer,[5] King Edward went to Maldon and built the stronghold and established it before he went from there. And in the same year, with the peace and help of King Edward, Jarl Thurcytel went across the sea (*ofer sæ*) to the land of the Franks with those men who wanted to follow him.'[6] Where in *Froncland* (France) could this important Danelaw jarl called Thurcytel and his followers have gone in *c*.916?[7] Given that the chronicler had just mentioned the return/arrival of a fleet from *Lidwiccum/Lioðwicum* (that is Brittany) in 914, then perhaps the term *Froncland* more meant Francia/Neustria? If Jarl Thurcytel arrived in France in the area that would become Normandy (even the Cotentin peninsula)[8] we know nothing of it because Flodoard's annals only start in

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[1] It is noticeable that Flodoard does not mention the arrival at Nantes, which again suggests this event happened before 919 when his extant annals start. R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale', p. 29, n. 7: 'Flodoard, dont le récit ne commence qu'à l'année 919 et qui a relaté en cette année 919 tous les ravages exercés en Bretagne par les Normands, ne dit pas un mot de la prise de Nantes, preuve que cet événement est plus ancien. Je n'aurais donc pas dû, dans mon édition de la Chronique de Nantes, attribuer à 919 la prise de Nantes, qui est de l'année précédente.'

[2] For which see the previous chapter.

[3] Before 11 November.

[4] *ASC A s.a.* 918 [=914], ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 100; ed. Bately: '7 þa æfter þam on þam ilcan gere foran to Martines mæssan, ða for Eadweard cyning to Buccingahamme mid his firde, 7 sæt þær feower wucan, 7 geworhte þa burga buta on ægþere healfe eas ær he þonon fore; 7 þurcytel eorl hine gesohte him to hlaforde, 7 þa holdas ealle, 7 þa ieldstan men ealle mæste ðe to Bedanforda hierdon, 7 eac monige þara þe to Hamtune hierdon.' *ASC D. s.a.* 915 [=914] ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 100; ed. Cubbin: '7 þa æfter þam on þam ilcan geare foran to Martines mæssan, þa for Eadweard cyning to Buccingahamme mid his fyrde, 7 sæt þær feower wucan, 7 geworhte þa byrig buta on ægþær healfe eas ær he þanon fore. 7 þurcytel eorl hine gesohte him to hlaforde, 7 þa eorlas ealle, 7 þa yldestan mæn þe to Bedaforda hyrdon, 7 eac mænege þæra þe to Hamtune hyrdon.' This was all part of Edward's first attempted conquest of the Mercian Danelaw following the death of Æthelred of Mercia.

[5] 24 June.

[6] *ASC A*, *s.a.* 920 [=916], ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 100; ed. Bately: 'Her on þys gere foran to middum sumera for Eadweard cyning to Mældune, 7 getimbrede þa burg 7 gestaðolode ær he þonon fore; 7 þy ilcan geare for Þurcytel eorl ofer sæ on Froncland mid þam mannum þe him gelæstan woldon mid Eadweardes cynges friþe 7 fultume.' It would seem that Thurcytel and others had not wished to continue to live under Edward's lordship and thus they had agreed with Edward that they would leave and go to *Froncland*.

[7] That he was an important jarl is clear because the *ASC* mentions him twice by name dealing with King Edward, no other Scandinavian chieftain is mentioned by name at this time.

[8] Lucien Musset tentatively suggested they settled in the Bessin: see for example L. Musset, *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 449, 459, 464. While possible the idea is solely based on certain toponyms in Normandy and I do not intend to enter into this long-running debate.

919.[1] Yet we cannot exclude the possibility that wherever he and his fleet made landfall he and his Danelaw followers then went on to Nantes/Brittany, as reported by Flodoard and the *Chronicle of Nantes*.[2] Perhaps the chieftain called Ragenold who certainly later commanded a fleet on the Loire was with them, or perhaps these were separate groups. We will return to this subject later, but Thurcytel and his Danelaw men are the only Scandinavians we know of who just before 919 went to France, they must have gone somewhere.

A fragment of the 'Annals' of Saint-Sauveur at Redon transcribed into a manuscript of Mont-Saint-Michel reports this devastation under the year 920: 'Anno DCCCCXX Normanni omnem minorem Britanniam vasteraverunt cunctis occisis vel ejectis Britonibus. Tunc asportata sunt corpora sanctorum qui errant in Britannia in diversas terras',[3] which Hubert Guillotel translates as follows: 'Les Normands dévastèrent toute la petite Bretagne, les Bretons étant les uns et les autres soit tués, soit chassés, alors des corps saints qui étaient en Bretagne furent emportés dans différentes régions.'[4] The refuge or ultimate destination of this second exodus of Breton bishops and monks was for the most part (though not exclusively) the Parisian region of Hugh the Great, following his father King Robert's death in 923 during a battle at Soissons.[5]

The *Chronicle of Nantes* says that after they had taken dominion of the province of Rouen, granted to them by Charles the Simple,[6] the Northmen then arrived from the *mare Ocean* in a great many ships and devastated all of Brittany, and through fear of them the Breton counts, viscounts and *machtierns* fled to Francia, Burgundy and Aquitaine.[7] At the same time the count of Poher, Matuedoi, together with a great many other Bretons, found refuge with Æthelstan, king of the English; he took with him his son Alan, who was later given the 'surname' *Barbe-Torte* ('Crooked Beard').[8] Alan is said to have been brought up from infancy with Æthelstan,

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[1] Once again in the form we have them.

[2] Based on the report of 'Florence of Worcester' regarding Thurcytel, who took his information from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931', p. 28, n. 5, says: 'La flotte des Normands, qui en 918 pénétra dans la Loire, venait d'Angleterre.'

[3] *Nova Bibliotheca manuscriptorum librorum*, ed. P. Labbé, vol. 1, p. 250.

[4] H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', p. 64 and n. 4; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 377. Cf. also J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 77.

[5] There is now a huge literature on the exodus of Breton saints and clergy, for which see in the first instance H. Guillotel, 'L'exode du clergé breton devant les invasions scandinaves', *Mémoires de la société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, vol. LIX (1982), pp. 269-315; A.-Y. Bourgès, 'Les Vikings dans l'hagiographie bretonne'; J.-C. Poulin, 'Les dossiers de S. Magloire de Dol et de S. Malo d'Alet (Province de Bretagne)', SHE II, *Francia*, 17/1 (1990); J.-C. Cassard, 'Avant les Normands', pp. 102-3; *idem*, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 48-59.

[6] Hence, and here following the very unreliable implicit chronology of Dudo of Saint-Quentin, after 911-912.

[7] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 27, p. 82.

[8] *Ibid*., chap. 27, pp. 82-83. We cannot determine the precise date of Matuedoi's and his infant son Alan's flight to exile in England. It is usually taken to have occurred in *c*.919 or slightly thereafter, but it might even have been as early as in the aftermath of the sack of the monastery of Landévennec in late 913 when the previous ruler of all Brittany, called Uurmaelon, was killed; cf. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, pp. 68-72; H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', pp. 68-69. D. N. Dumville, 'Brittany and "Armes Prydein Vaw"', *Etudes Celtiques*, 20 (1983), p. 151, has

king of the English,[1] and to have become his godson: 'Æthelstan, king of England, had lifted Alan from the holy font. The king had great trust in him because of this friendship and the alliance of this baptism.'[2]

The fate of the ordinary Bretons was possibly worse. The *Chronicle of Nantes* says that only they remained to cultivate the earth under the domination of the Northmen, without leaders and defenders.[3] Jean-Christophe Cassard has suggested that it is also quite possible that on their way round the coast of southern Brittany to Nantes these Northmen had made a landfall on the salt-producing Guérande peninsula as told of in the 'historically little-founded' *Miracles of Saint Aubin of Angers.*[4] Auguste Eckel dates this to 919, Jean-Christophe Cassard to 918.[5]

The Scandinavian fleet came to the Loire according to R. Merlet and A. de La Borderie before attacking coastal Brittany, so perhaps in 918 although it could have been in 919 or even early 920 which is the present consensus. Whatever the case may have been, we know from Flodoard that those Northmen who were operating on the Loire in 921 had previously devastated Brittany.[6] The only direct report of their arrival in Nantes comes once again from the pen of the chronicler of Nantes. At the end of chapter 27 we read: 'Deinde quomodo isti Normanni furiosi, per fluvium Ligeris cum ingenti strepitu navium ascendentes, ceperunt urbes Namneticam […].'[7] At the beginning of chapter 28 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* we hear that when the Northmen had taken Nantes and its 'château' and caused much damage, the bishop of Nantes, Adalard, had had to flee to Burgundy with his clerics.[8] This much we may accept as

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suggested that Alan might have been born in England, and it is quite likely Æthelstan's father Edward the Elder had sheltered the Breton nobles first. See also S. Foot, *Æthelstan. The first king of England* (Yale, 2001), p. 53; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 196-97.

[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 29, p. 89.

[2] *Ibid.*, chap. 27, pp. 82-83.

[3] *Ibid.*, chap. 27, p. 83: 'Pauperes vero Britanni terram cotentes sub potestate Normannorum remanserunt absque rectore et defensore.'

[4] *Miracula sancti Albini episcopi Andegavensis*, *AA*, *SS*, Martii I (Paris, 1865), pp. 60-63. Élisabeth Carpentier and Georges Pon, 'Les miracles posthumes de saint Aubin d'Angers', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 125. 2 (2018), pp. 37-62, at pp. 58-59, provide a French translation of the miracle but do not hazard a guess as regards the dating of the event, saying only, 'Le récit de la victoire des Guérandais sur les Normands qu'il est difficile de dater, puisque les Normands ont attaqué ou occupé les régions de la basse Loire du milieu du IXe siècle jusqu'en 937 […]. La date de 919, retenue par certains historiens locaux n'a pas de fondement sérieux. Une dernière vague d'invasions normandes a menacé les rivages de l'Océan atlantique au début du XIe siècle mais a-t-elle touché la basse Loire ?', (p. 41 and n. 26). For this see Chapter 16.
See also A.-Y. Bourgès, 'Les Vikings dans l'hagiographie bretonne', p. 216; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 351-52; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 47.

[5] A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, p. 85; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 47.

[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 921: *Annales*, p. 6; *Annals*, p. 5.

[7] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 27, p. 83.

[8] *Ibid.*, chap. 28, pp. 84-85. Cf. J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Puissance temporelle et pouvoir diocésain des évêques de Nantes entre 936 et 1049', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 61 (1984), pp. 29-82, at pp. 45-46; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 349 and n. 2; É. Mabille, 'Les invasions normandes dans la Loire', p. 453.

true. However, at the end of chapter 27 we are also told that these Northmen then went up the Loire and took the towns of Angers and Tours, and they even got to Orléans. This is clearly a misplaced borrowing from events in the mid-ninth century taken from Adrevald of Fleury's first book of *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, as also found reported in Prudentius of Troyes' part of the *Annals of Saint-Bertin* and independently in the *Annals of Angoulême*. The remainder of chapter 28 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* repeats the attacks and devastations of the Northmen further up the Loire and into the river Maine, followed by a long story telling of the Northmen's return to the island of *Betia* opposite Nantes, where they found another group of Northmen *in situ* with whom they fought.[1] As Ferdinand Lot long ago quite categorically showed[2] this whole story has been borrowed, and modified slightly, from Adrevald's *Miracles of Saint Benedict* (found in chapter 33), and from the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, and the events all relate to the 850s which were discussed in Chapter 4.

There is also a story found in the *Miracles of Saint Martin of Vertou* which shows the Northmen gratuitously amusing themselves by inflicting sufferings on a population incapable of defending itself. In fact, the story only tells of the cutting off of the hands of some lay servants of the monastery, the intercession of the saint just allowed one of them, called Arnulf, to regain such an agility that he was able in the future to kill ferocious wild boars with a lance![3] This *Miracle* is dated by Cassard to before 920 (hence to the period being examined here),[4] however a date as late as *c*.960 is possible.

What is far more interesting and historically much more reliable regarding the activities of the Northmen once they had arrived at and taken Nantes is a truly remarkable charter/notice written at the Breton monastery of Redon in June 924.[5] It tells of these Northmen operating south of the Loire in Poitou. The notice says that earlier (than 924) the monks of Redon had received a visit from a priest called Tutgal who had come to Brittany on the advice and with the consent of viscount Aimeri to try to bring back the body of Maixent to the abbey of Saint-Maixent (dep. Deux-Sèvres in Lower Poitou). The Redon monks accepted the proposition and set off for Poitou. Eventually, when the monks reached the Loire, we are told that the Northmen were ravaging in Poitou (to where the monks had been heading) and thus they could not proceed

[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 28, pp. 85-87.
[2] F. Lot, 'Le soi-disant prise de Nantes', pp. 706-11. See also L. Halphen, 'Note sur la Chronique de Saint-Maixent', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 69 (1908), pp. 405-11, at p. 407.
[3] *Miracula sancti Martini Vertavensis*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH, SRM*, 3, p. 573.
[4] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 47, who also summarises the story.
[5] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson no. 283, pp. 228-230. The notice and its implications are described in detail by H. Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 384-85), *idem*, 'L'exode d du clergé breton devant les invasions scandinaves', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne* (1982), pp. 269-315, at pp. 285-87.

any further, and as they could not return home (probably for fear of an attack on Redon itself) they pushed on further east and reached the church of Candé (Candé-sur-Beuvron, dep. Loir-et-Cher), situated at the confluence of the Loire and the river Beuvron between Tours and Blois. There they bought the church and its domain for sixty sous. But they could not stay long here because they were still afraid of the devastations of the Northmen - implicitly those south of the Loire in Poitou - so they resolved to transport Saint Maixent's body into the county of Auxerre with the aid of the duke/marquis of Burgundy Richard the Justiciar (father of the future king Rodulf) who we are told was still alive ('cum adjutorio Richardi comitis tunc tempori sin corpore vivente'). Although Richard and the bishops and magnates of Burgundy promised the Redon monks (who were by now in Auxerre) more lands in Burgundy they still wanted to go to Poitou, so in 924 they sent two messengers to meet with Viscount Aimeri and the count of Poitou Ebles Manzer promising to bring the saint's body there as long as they received enough lands and revenues to maintain their community. Much more could be said about this peregrination of the monks of Redon with the body of the holy Saint Maixent. For our purposes the chronology of all this is important. Not only does this detailed Redon notice tie in with the fragment of the 'Annals' of Redon, which as was noted above places in 920 the transfer a of certain number of saints' bodies outside Brittany, but the fact that Richard the Justiciar was still alive in, and just after, the Redon monks had reached Candé places these events, when there were Northmen obviously operating on the Loire and even south of the river in Poitou, before Richard's death, which occurred on 31 August 921.[1] Which, to repeat somewhat, clearly suggests that having come to Nantes the Northmen had quickly set out to make incursions up the Loire and into Poitou.

But let us now go back a little. When the Northmen arrived at Nantes and Bishop Adalard had fled to Burgundy who was in control of Nantes? Based on a welter of charter evidence Karl Ferdinand Werner has conclusively shown that it must have been Fulk the Red, the real founder of the future house of Anjou. Werner has established that Fulk had managed to seize control of the county of Nantes probably in late 907 or early 908 shortly after the death of the Breton king/duke Alan the Great in 907, and by 914 he was already being called both the count of Nantes and the viscount of Angers.[2] Fulk was a vassal of the marquis of Neustria,[3] Robert, the brother of the late king Odo (d. 898), who himself briefly became king of west Francia in 922

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 921: *Annales*, p. 8; *Annals*, p. 5; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 385.
[2] K. F. Werner, 'Untersuchungen zur Frühzeit des Französischen Fürstentums (9.-10. Jahrhundert)', *Die Welt als Geschichte*, 18 (1958), pp. 256-89, at pp. 266-71.
[3] This is why he was only referred to as the viscount of Angers.

before dying in a battle fought with the Carolingian Charles the Simple near Soissons in 923.[1] It was Fulk the Red, most probably with the help of his lord the marquis Robert, who the Northmen removed from Nantes in 919. Robert's right to Nantes is explained by Werner: 'Vor 919 hat der Vasall des Grafen Robert, der Vicomte Fulco von Angers, mit Billigung und Unterstützung seines Lehnsherrn, Nantes innegehabt. Robert betrachtete sich demnach als Lehnsherr dieses südlichen Teils der Bretagne und der Stadt Nantes und konnte sie also auch abtreten.'[2] In English: 'Before 919 the viscount of Angers Fulk, the vassal of Count Robert, had held Nantes with the agreement and support of his feudal lord. Robert consequently regarded himself as the feudal lord of this southerly part of Brittany and the town of Nantes, and [he] could thus cede them.'[3] Or better in French: 'Avant 919, le vassal du comte Robert, le vicomte Foulque d'Angers, a détenu Nantes avec l'approbation et le soutien de son seigneur féodal. Robert se considérait ainsi comme le seigneur féodal de cette partie méridionale de la Bretagne et de la ville de Nantes et pouvait donc aussi les céder.'[4]

From the summer of 921 the Franks made their first serious effort to repel and remove the Northmen who had recently arrived at Nantes and on the lower Loire. A force led by Robert ('the Great'), the powerful marquis of Neustria, 'besieged the Northmen who were operating on the Loire', for five months Flodoard tell us.[5] Given that Nantes had only recently been taken from Robert's vassal Fulk the Red it is no great surprise that Robert led this effort to remove them. As Hubert Guillotel quite rightly says regarding Robert, the Northmen's installation 'à demeure constitue une menace grave pour ses comtés d'Angers, de Blois, de Tours et d'Orléans, assis sur le cours de la Loire'.[6] We do not know where this siege took place, it was probably but not certainly somewhere on the Loire, but even if so there is no compelling reason to think it happened at Nantes.[7] Wherever it took place the siege was ultimately unsuccessful and Robert had failed to get rid of the Northmen. According to Flodoard, Robert in fact just 'received hostages' from the Northmen and 'conceded Brittany to the Northmen, which they had

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 13; *Annals*, p. 8; *Richer of Saint-Rémi. Histories,* ed. and trans. Lake, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass, 2011) [hereafter Richer of Reims], vol. 1, book 1, chaps. 44-46, pp. 106-17. See also P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul de Bourgogne, rois de France (923-936)* (Paris, 1910), pp. 10-12; A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple*, pp. 122-24; Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet : naissance d'une dynastie* (Paris, 1987), pp. 86-87.
[2] K. F. Werner, 'Untersuchungen', (1958), p. 269.
[3] My translation.
[4] K. F. Werner, *Enquêtes sur les premiers temps du principat français (IXe et Xe siècles) = Untersuchungen zur Frühzeit des französischen Fürstentums, 9.-10 Jahrhundert*, trans. B. Saint-Sorny (Ostfildern, 2004), p. 45.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 921; *Annales*, p. 6; *Annals*, p. 5.
[6] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 387.
[7] Had the Northmen reoccupied the ruined city of Nantes, or even the island of *Betia* which they had used in the 850s? Might they have already moved further up the Loire, perhaps even to their former base on the Île Batailleuse opposite the monastery of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil which was in the heart of Robert's territory? We will probably never know.

devastated, along with the *pagus* of Nantes'. This agreement, after which Robert withdrew, as with many others made with the Northmen before, seems to have also included the baptism of some of the Northmen - no doubt their leaders first - because Flodoard adds the comment that 'the Northmen began to take up the faith of Christ'.[1] Whether this conversion had any lasting effect might be doubted.[2] Flodoard who tells us all this does not state who the Northmen's chieftain was. It is usually assumed by historians that it was Ragenold who Flodoard tells us was the *princeps* of the Northmen engaged on the Loire in 923. Indeed, it is usually further assumed that Ragenold had led the Northmen into Brittany in *c*.918-919. Given the close connection of all these events this assumption is probably correct but it is by no means certain.[3]

Some historians have expressed surprise that Robert had conceded Brittany and the Nantais to the Northmen. For example Jan Dhondt says: 'Comment Robert peut-il disposer de la Bretagne et du Nantais, régions qui non seulement ne lui ont jamais appartenu pas qu'à sa famille, mais qui en outre ont depuis longtemps échappé à toute autorité effective de la couronne?'[4] But there is really nothing surprising in all this. As already noted, Robert's vassal Fulk the Red had probably first taken control of Nantes in late 907 or early 908 and there is little or no doubt that he was still the count of Nantes when the Northmen captured the city in 919 or 920. Fulk himself could very well have been with Robert during the five-month siege; it would be rather surprising if he had not been. From Robert's point of view as Fulk's lord he would have every right to grant the Nantais to the Northmen having failed to dislodge them during his siege. We may reasonably presume that Fulk was disappointed to say the least. But Robert, and perhaps even Fulk himself, likely saw this as a necessary stop-gap measure - as later events were to show it to really have been - a measure which was intended to limit the Northmen's presence to the lower Loire while allowing him time to return north to confront Charles the Simple - which Robert actually did the next year when he deposed Charles and took the West Frankish crown for himself. Regarding Brittany, most of the Breton lords and clerics had already either fled or would soon flee. Robert maybe had even earlier than this seen a chance to add Brittany to his huge marquisate, but if he had any such ambition it seems to have come to nought. What Robert was doing by conceding Brittany to the Northmen was acknowledging their presence in Brittany and his non-existent position and power there. He was

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 921: *Annales*, p. 6; *Annals*, p. 5.
[2] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 81: 'Ce longue siège [of 921] se solde en somme par un échec pratique, et le fait que les païens aient accepté du bout des lèvres de se convertir au christianisme n'y change rien.'
[3] If Ragenold had not been the leader of the Northmen ravaging the coasts of Brittany in 919 and arrived at Nantes either just before or after, this would open up a veritable Pandora's Box of issues for our interpretation of the activities of the Northmen in France during these years.
[4] J. Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France (Ixe-Xe siècle)*, p. 112.

in essence just giving his tacit approval for the Northmen to do as they wished in the area, which is what they then did for the next ten years. According to Hubert Guillotel: 'S'il [Robert] se résigne à leur concéder la Bretagne et le Nantais, c'est qu'il pense déjà à devenir roi à la place de Charles le Simple et qu'il lui faut pour un certain temps, être libre sur ses arrières, du côté de l'Ouest.'[1] Guillotel also thinks that 'd'un point de vue institutionnel, c'est à partir de cette année 921 que l'on conclut à l'existence d'une principauté scandinave à Nantes'.[2] Guillotel's point is well taken although the idea of a Scandinavian 'principality' based at Nantes is a bit overstated as events in the coming years would certainly show.

The next year, 922, was a decisive one in the history of the West Frankish realm because it was the year in which Robert of Neustria with the support of many Frankish magnates usurped the kingdom of Charles and was crowned king.[3]

The Northmen on the Loire played no part in these northern events, nor did the Northmen of the lower Seine. The former group appear to have been content during 922 to use the time to regain their strength and possibly enhance their encampments, but as will be seen later they could possibly have made an attack on the monastery at Fleury in this year. Then in early 923, apparently not wanting to settle down to a peaceful life in the Nantais, or at least not being satisfied with making new attacks in Brittany, they went back to raiding. Avoiding the domains of the new king Robert they made a truly astonishing long-distance raid into Aquitaine (south of the Loire) which reached as far as the Auvergne. According to Flodoard at some point early in the year 'the Northmen raided Aquitaine and the Auvergne, William [II] the duke of the Aquitanians, and Raymond [count of Toulouse] fought against them and 12,000 of the Northmen were killed there'.[4] Flodoard is usually very conservative in his estimates of losses in battle on either side. Thus although 12,000 is a suspiciously large and round number it no doubt reflects that Flodoard had heard from someone of a very significant defeat for the Northmen. Neither William II of Aquitaine, who was also the count of Auvergne, nor Raymond of Toulouse had recognised the election of Robert, as they would not recognise any authority or suzerainty of his successor Rodulf of Burgundy later in the year following Robert's death at the battle near Soissons and the election of Rodulf to the kingship.[5] This Scandinavian

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[1] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 378.
[2] *Ibid*., pp. 377-78.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 922: *Annales*, pp. 9-11; *Annals*, pp. 6-7. For an overview of these events see P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, pp. 7-19; W. Lippert, *König Rudolf von Frankreich* (Leipzig,1886), pp. 10-14; Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, pp. 73-87.
[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 12; *Annals*, p. 7.
[5] For this point see L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 455-60; P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, pp. 16-19; C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges (Velay, Gévaudan) du VIIe au XIe siècle: La fin du monde antique?* (Le Puy, 1987), pp. 48-49.

chevauchée seems to have been just that. I can see no conceivable or plausible connection between it and the political events unfolding in northern Francia, but it is one illustration of the fact that it was often the local magnates rather than royal forces who managed to confront and sometimes defeat, or sometimes just pay off, Scandinavians raiding into their territories.

Before continuing, we must ask the question of whether this long-distance raid can be attributed to the Northmen established on the lower Loire. Although Flodoard does not say so categorically it is invariably assumed they were. I can only agree. There is not a scintilla of evidence that there was any other significant Scandinavian force operating in Aquitaine south of the Loire at this time, or for that matter during the preceding few decades. In addition, from what we know of the Seine-based Northmen in 923 or a little before, which is basically nothing until we hear mention of them rather obliquely for the very first time in Flodoard's *Annals* later in the same year, it seems highly unlikely that they were involved. Finally, the chronology of the movements of the Northmen in France we have been discussing meshes perfectly together.[1]

The fact that the newly arrived Loire-based Northmen who had been granted Brittany and the county of Nantes in 921 had then in early 923 made this deep raid into Aquitaine and the Auvergne clearly shows that they were primarily concerned with enriching themselves, at least at this stage, and not with establishing some sort of 'principality' based at Nantes, or even in Brittany. After Robert had withdrawn with a certain humiliation in 921 the Northmen had free rein to continue their pillages as they saw fit as they would do from their base or bases on the lower Loire and in Brittany until the return of Alan Barbe-Torte from England in 936 and their final expulsion from the region in 939.

Whatever the case may have been, having suffered such a significant defeat at the hands of William of Aquitaine and Raymond of Toulouse the next thing we hear of these Northmen from the Loire is later in 923 when they moved on to Francia north of the Seine. These events must be examined in some detail because they demonstrate a very clear connection between the supposedly separate Loire Northmen and groups now settled on the Seine.

Ragenold in Francia

Flodoard tells us that when the West Frankish king Robert died in 923 in a battle near Soissons against the Carolingian king Charles the Simple, who had been ousted by Robert the year before, Charles had then retreated to Lotharingia; the Frankish magnates chose not to give their

[1] The fact that Raymond of Toulouse was involved in this victory could perhaps suggest that the Northmen's defeat may have taken place quite a long way south, although we have no idea exactly where.

support to Charles in spite of the pleas of his legates.[1] Instead the magnates chose as their king, and subsequently sent for, the Burgundian duke Rodulf, the son of Richard the Justiciar.[2]

No doubt by now rather desperate, Charles had then summoned the 'Northmen' (presumedly those of the lower Seine)[3] to come to help him, but Rodulf and the Frankish magnates prevented these Northmen, who were by then on the river Oise, from joining up with Charles and so Charles again 'fled back across the Meuse' to safety in Lotharingia. Rodulf was then proclaimed king of West Francia at Soissons on 13 July 923 at the monastery of Saint-Medard.[4] It was then that the Northmen engaged on the river Loire (*in fluvio Ligeri versabantur*) under their *princeps* Ragenold first enter the northern scene. They came north (doubtless first by ship to Rouen) and then crossed the Oise and raided into Francia. Flodoard says that Ragenold's Northmen 'had been stirred up for a long time by Charles's frequent messages'.[5] This means that Charles's envoys had been making appeals for their assistance, either following his disposition by Robert in 922 or perhaps from even before that. That King Charles had looked for support from the Northmen established on the Seine as well as Ragenold's who had recently been active on the Loire would suggest not only that he was bereft of Frankish supporters but also that his need for Scandinavian allies was very great indeed. It perhaps also indicates previous dealings between the Loire-based Northmen and Charles, and maybe even a relationship between the two groups of Northmen themselves. These two possibilities might be supported by the fact that when Ragenold's Northmen from the Loire arrived in northern Francia they were, according to Flodoard, joined by 'many from Rouen',[6] seemingly with no hesitation. Indeed, Ragenold took command of these Rouen Northmen, or at least a portion of them. As Philippe Lauer put it, Ragenold 'avait pris le commandement des Normands de Rollon établis sur les bords de la basse Seine'.[7]

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, pp. 13-15; *Annals*, pp. 7-9. Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 46, pp. 112-13, says that King Robert was killed by Count Fulbert.

[2] French historians usually call the latinised *Rodulfus* of the sources Raoul. I prefer the more original Germanic Rodulf.

[3] Once again this is simply an assumption.

[4] P. Lauer, ed., *Flodoard*, *Annales*, p. 14, n. 3. For a recent excellent assessment of the last years of Charles the Simple and the situation in Francia in the 920s see F. McNair, 'After Soissons: The Last Years of Charles the Simple (923-929)', *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 18. 2 (2017), pp. 1-20.

[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 15; *Annals*, pp. 8-9.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 24. It is not explicitly stated that Ragenold 'took the command' of these many Northmen from Rouen, the word used is *conjunctis*. P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 146, says: 'Les Normands de Rouen s'associent à ceux de la Loire, emmené par Roegnvald, pour ravage les pagi situés au-delà de l'Oise.' Nevertheless, that Philippe Lauer is probably right can in my opinion be seen because immediately afterwards we are told of Ragenold again leading his own army, which does suggest that these 'many' Rouen Northmen had both joined/associated with him and taken his command. In addition, this is the first time Flodoard ever mentions any Northmen from Rouen (and he does not mention Rollo for another two years), which at least

Why would the Rouen-based Northmen suddenly and willingly accept Ragenold's leadership and follow him in his subsequent fights if the two groups had no prior common history or even relationship? The possibility that there was a close connection between Ragenold's and Rollo's 'Seine-based' Northmen has never been examined seriously by any historian;[1] it should be. More will be said of this later. What is also most noteworthy is that Charles's appeal for Ragenold's help in the north, which would naturally have also included the promise of lands or a significant payment, was more attractive to Ragenold than staying in Nantes or Brittany. It would appear that for whatever reason he really no longer had much further interest there. Why?

In any case Ragenold's men plus the Rouen Northmen who had joined him then crossed the Oise and raided 'Francia' directly threatening Count Herbert of Vermandois's territory and interests.[2] Herbert was one of Rodulf's main supporters at this time, and immediately after being told of some of the Rouen Northmen joining with Ragenold to raid beyond the Oise Flodard writes: 'Heribert's *fideles* unexpectedly overcame the camp of the Northmen from Rouen, who had remained in their *castella*.'[3] This at least is how Fanning and Bachrach interpret and translate the text, however the full Latin text says: 'Interea Ragenboldus, princeps Nordmannorum qui in fluvio Ligeri versabantur, Karoli frequentibus missis jampridem excitus, Franciam trans Isaram conjunctis sibi plurimis ex Rodomo, depraedatur; eujus castris supervenientes fideles Heriberti, qui per castella remanserant, adjunctis sibi Rofulfo, privigno Rotgeri, et Ingobranno comitibus, praedum ingentum eripuerunt, et captivi mille ibidem liberati sunt.'[4]

We can perhaps see that whose camp was seized by Herbert is not quite as clear as Fanning and Bachrach say; perhaps it was one of Ragenold's camps and not that of the Rouen Northmen? Readers can decide for themselves. Nevertheless, I tend to agree with Fanning and Bachrach's interpretation because of the fact that 1,000 captives were liberated. Ragenold had

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gives rise to the suspicion that at least for Flodoard at Reims the Rouen Northmen were not of any great interest at this time.

[1] This is possibly because French historians have either been concerned with studying the long struggles between the Robertians and Carolingians for control of West Francia or, alternatively, with the origins of Normandy. And other 'viking' chieftains who were at least as important as Rollo at the time in France had not managed to establish any long-lasting 'colonies'. The winner always writes the history.

[2] Hubert Guillotel (in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 378) says: 'Le Viking Rögenvald de son côté lorsqu'il traversait l'Oise, arrivait du Nantais par Rouen, où il avait recruté un nombre de guerriers et attaquait la région dominée par Herbert de Vermandois.' Guillotel then adds: 'Voulait-il simplement venir en aide à Charles le Simple ou le libérer ?'

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annals*, p. 9.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, pp. 15-16.

only just arrived from the Loire so when would he have had the time to capture so many Franks?[1]

According to Flodoard these Northmen, who if Rouen Northmen are meant might or might not have been commanded by Rollo,[2] had been holed up in their *castella*.[3] 'When Ragenold heard of this he was enraged and ravaged the *pagus* of Arras'[4] (Artois, dep. Pas-de-Calais). But Ragenold suffered a defeat at the hands of Count Adelemus of Arras. Having lost six hundred men Ragenold and his men 'slipped away in flight' and took refuge in his *munitiones*.[5] Yet Flodoard then tells us that Ragenold and his force did not leave but rather that they still continued their plundering from there - a very important fact.[6] That Ragenold was 'enraged' when he heard of the Rouen Northmen's loss of one of their *castella* also suggests a close relationship between the two groups.[7] In addition to this, Ragenold and his men had withdrawn to their *munitiones*. It would be very illuminating if we knew where Ragenold's *munitiones* were situated, but it is of great significance that Ragenold actually had some (we do not know how many) pre-existing *munitiones* at this date. In my opinion he would not have had the time just to throw up all of these *munitiones* in the few weeks since his arrival from the Loire, so when had he established them? Could it have been at an earlier date? Before he had even gone to the Loire?[8]

Flodoard tells us that 'because of all these actions' involving the Northmen, who were mostly Ragenold's it seems, Hugh the Great then 'summoned' King Rodulf back from

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[1] If on the other hand it was really one of Ragenold's camps that had been seized by Herbert this would beg the question of where these one thousand captives had been captured: on the Loire/in Brittany/in Aquitaine, and then shipped back North?

[2] Flodoard does not give Rollo's name until 925.

[3] Where were the Rouen Northmen's other *castella*?

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 16; *Annals*, p. 9.

[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 16: 'eum quibus Ragenoldus ad munitionum suarum properat refugia'; *Annals*, p. 9.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] Here once again following Fanning and Bachrach's interpretation, although it may be worth noting Flodoard's use of the words *castrum* for the camp/fort seized by Herbert and *castella* for all the Rouen Northmen's forts but uses the word *munitiones* for Ragenold's camps.

[8] In personal correspondence on this point Pierre Bauduin says regarding the argumentation here: 'Je ne suis pas convaincu'. Bauduin's opinion is based on his suggestion that 'les travaux sur les camps vikings montrent que des camps vikings pouvaient être élevées rapidement.'. This view, he says, is based on the examples of Torksey in England and Woodstown in Ireland. Regarding Torksey, Bauduin says (per. comm.): 'Les fouilles de Torksey suggèrent que le camp a été élevé durant l'hiver 872-873 and that 'L'occupation, à cette période précise, n'aurait pas excédé un an'; referencing here D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards, 'The winter camp of the Viking Great Army, 872-3, Torksey, Lincolnshire', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 96 (2016), pp. 23-67. For Woodstown in Ireland Bauduin references I. Russell and M. F. Hurley (eds.), *Woodstown: a Viking-age settlement in co. Waterford* (Dublin, 2014), but he says that in this case 'il n'y a pas d'éléments sur la durée de la construction du camp et la datation est moins précise'. Fair enough, that a 'viking' camp could be erected rather quickly is not to be doubted but here Flodoard is telling us of several camps to which Ragenold and his men had withdrawn in 923. Why would Ragenold have established several camps (*munitiones)* in 923 in the course of a few weeks immediately after his arrival in or return to the North?

Burgundy to Compiègne on the Oise.[1] Earlier the same year, the Frankish magnates had supported Rodulf in becoming king, but Rodulf had immediately gone back to Burgundy after his coronation at Soissons[2] and he had left it to Hugh and other northern magnates to fight the Northmen, as he would do again later. Upon hearing that the Northmen had now plundered the *pagus* of Beauvais (Picardy, dep. Oise) Rodulf, accompanied by Herbert of Vermandois and Archbishop Seulfus, crossed the Oise and the Epte and 'entered the land that had been given to the Northmen when they had come to the faith of Christ shortly before,[3] so that they might cultivate the faith and have peace',[4] that is into the territory supposedly granted to Rollo by Charles the Simple during a 'treaty' placed by Dudo of Saint-Quentin at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, in 911 according to most historians.[5] There is no need to assume, as is commonly done, that the Northmen who had plundered the *pagus* of Beauvais were exclusively the Rouen Northmen who had last been heard of earlier in the year holed up in their *castella* which was then captured by the Franks. In addition, Flodoard has just told us that Ragenold's Northmen had continued to plunder from their *munitiones* so it is highly likely that Ragenold and his men (possibly still including his men from Rouen) were involved in the attacks on Beauvais. Whatever the case, the new king Rodulf and the Franks devastated this recently acquired Northmen's land because they had 'broken the peace' which they had earlier agreed with King Charles (the Simple).[6] It seems that this move beyond the Epte met no resistance from the Northmen, doubtless because their forces were still established around the river Oise. It was clearly a reprisal on Rodulf's

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 16; *Annals*, p. 9.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 15; *Annals*, p. 8.
[3] Supposedly Rollo and his Northmen were baptised in 912, at least according to Dudo, which does seem a bit longer ago than 'shortly before', but this is not the place to enter into a discussion of the chronology of Dudo's story of Rollo's treaty and baptism.
[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 16; *Annals*, p. 9.
[5] Dudo does not mention the date. For a discussion of the first 'frontier' of the early Seine Northmen along the Andelle and then the Epte see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 78-83, 135-41; *idem*, 'Des raids scandinaves à l'établissement de la principauté de Rouen', pp. 409-11. For a somewhat different assessment see for example J. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IXe siècle'; *idem*, 'La Seine et les Normands avant 911', in M. Pierre (ed.), *Naissance de la Normandie - 911, le traité de Saint-Clair-sur-Epte,1100e anniversaire* (Paris, 2013), pp. 19-34; *idem*, 'La basse Seine et les Normands: des premiers raids scandinaves au traité de Saint-Clair-sur-Epte', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc*, pp. 53-62.
[6] Once again this is usually taken to be a reference to the supposed treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 911. But more important is that Flodoard seems to be implying that a 'peace' made with one king of West Francia, Charles the Simple, should be honoured by the Northmen under the new 'usurper' king, Rodulf. But who had broken the peace? Possibly not those men of Rouen who had been attacked and removed from their *castella*? If not, then it must have been Ragenold's and/or those Rouen Northmen who had joined him. As noted above by 923 Ragenold's Northmen already had some *munitiones*. When had they been established? In addition, as will be discussed later, one very plausible possibility is that Ragenold had actually come from Normandy before attacking Brittany and entering the Loire.

part perhaps intended as was the case in 925[1] to get the Northmen to rush back home. But the Northmen had not rushed back in 923. At this moment, in the late summer/autumn of 923, Flodoard tells us that Charles now promised the Northmen 'a vast amount of land'.[2] No doubt he was desperate to keep the Northmen, most probably both Ragenold's and those from Rouen, on his side or in his employ. But Flodoard tells us that not long before this Herbert of Vermandois had taken Charles as a captive, incarcerating him first in his *castellum* of St-Quentin and then transferring him to his *munitio* at Château-Thierry on the Marne.[3] If we follow Flodoard's order this capture had preceded Ragenold's arrival on the Oise. It thus seems that Charles had made his promise of 'a vast amount of land' from his prison![4]

But Rodulf had to break off his 'devastations' into the Northmen's core territory to go and deal with the Lotharingians who had yet to recognise him as their rightful king but who had at this moment sent envoys to say that 'they would place themselves and their possessions under him'. Rodulf left and spent 'the entire autumn' dealing with Lotharingian matters.[5] Rodulf left counts Hugh and Herbert on the east bank of the Oise 'to protect the fatherland',[6] as they had been before.[7] Later in the year while Rodulf was still trying to consolidate and control his newly acquired realm the Northmen continued to raid 'certain of our *pagi* across the Oise',[8] that is in Picardy, while the Franks attacked the Northmen's land.[9] This was all tit for tat. Embassies were sent back and forth between the 'Northmen' and Herbert of Vermandois, Seulfus, archbishop of Reims, and 'the other Franks who were encamped with them against the Northmen' on the Oise. But the Northmen kept demanding that in return for 'peace' they be given 'the more spacious lands beyond the Seine which they had requested'.[10] Maybe Charles's earlier promise (from prison) to give the Northmen a 'vast amount of land' had led them to specify more precisely to Rodulf's allies where they wanted this land, hence 'beyond the Seine',

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, pp. 30-31; *Annals*, p. 14: 'When the Northmen learned of the devastation of their land, they rushed back home.' P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 37: 'Cette heureuse diversion produit le résultat attendu. Les Normands retournèrent en hâte à la défense de leurs foyers.'
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 16; *Annals*, p. 9.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 15; *Annals*, p. 8. Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 47, pp. 116-19.
[4] It was almost certainly the case that Charles's actions in calling in the Northmen to help him was a major factor undermining his support among the Frankish nobility; see, for example, F. McNair, 'After Soissons', pp. 10-11.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 17; *Annals*, p. 9.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] Mostly Hugh. When Rodulf had gone back to Burgundy after his coronation Herbert of Vermandois had gone with him, but Herbert came back a little before Rodulf to join with Count Rodulf of Coucy and Count Ingobrannus to loot the Rouen Northmen's *castella*, which Herbert's *fideles* had just captured; cf. Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, pp. 15-16; *Annals*, pp. 8-9.
[8] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 17; *Annals*, p. 9.
[9] *Ibid*.
[10] *Ibid*.

which from Flodoard's location in Reims can only mean to the west of Rouen in the direction of Bayeux, or even in the direction of the *pagus* of Le Mans. But all these embassies and demands had not actually resulted in any concessions of land 'beyond the Seine', that is in Hugh the Great's vast Neustrian marquisate.

At this time, with Charles still being held captive, the Northmen must have realised that they would get nothing of significance from Charles who had few supporters amongst the Franks and he certainly was in no position to raise the money to buy their services or give them any lands, and the land they wanted beyond the Seine was in the power of count Hugh who was still at this time a loyal supporter of Rodulf. Given all this, what did the Northmen do? Naturally towards the end of the year they switched sides. They sent an embassy to Rodulf, who had now arrived at Laon from Lotharingia, gave the new king hostages and accepted a truce to last until the following May (924).[1] Rodulf, however, still did not give the Northmen any lands but this truce allowed him to attend to his struggles in Lotharingia[2] and allowed the Northmen to spend the winter in peace.

It might well be that this was the occasion when Ragenold's Northmen returned to the Loire (if that is where they went), but it is more likely that they stayed in Francia somewhat longer. At the time the truce was made it had probably been the case that the Northmen had demanded a large cash payment from Rodulf if they were to permanently desert Charles's cause, and/or stop their raids, or even offer their fealty to the new king. They might also have repeated their oft-made demand for more land to the west of the Seine. That at least a heavy tribute had been demanded is strongly suggested by the fact that 'early' in 924, likely even before the truce was due to expire in May, the Franks collected a tax throughout Francia which was then 'handed over to the Northmen for a pact of peace'. Rodulf then dashed to Aquitaine to try to get the submission of 'William the *princeps* of that region',[3] that is William II of Aquitaine (d. 926), who it will be remembered had heavily defeated Ragenold's Northmen in early 923. It is not impossible that the large tribute paid to the Northmen in early 924 had been paid to both the Rouen Northmen and to Ragenold and his men who were so clearly connected.

Later in 924 Rodulf was in Attigny preparing for an expedition into Lotharinigia but he became very ill. He recovered somewhat but after suffering a relapse he quickly returned to Burgundy.[4] In Rodulf's absence Flodoard tells us that, probably in late autumn, 'due to the

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 923: *Annales*, p. 18; *Annals*, pp. 9-10.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 19; *Annals*, p. 10; Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 48, pp. 120-21.
[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 23; *Annals*, pp. 11-12.

efforts of the Hugh the Great (Robert's son) and Count Herbert of Vermandois and Archbishop Seulfus of Reims', a 'pact' was made with the Northmen, accompanied 'by oaths'.[1] There then seems to have been a second step in these negotiations because on top of this peace sworn by oaths, and on top of the tribute they had received from the Franks earlier in the year, the Northmen had obviously once again asked the Frankish magnates, led by Hugh, for the concession of more lands as they had previously asked Rodulf's rival Charles the Simple and even Rodulf's own representatives. So, Flodoard tells us, these counts led by Hugh had then 'with the king's consent' conceded more lands 'to the Northmen in a 'pact of peace' (*pacto pacis*), that is the Maine and the Bessin' (*Cinomannis et Baioeae*).[2] These concessions had clearly been made only to Rollo's Seine-based Northmen because immediately afterwards Flodoard tells us that 'Ragenold with his Northmen laid waste the lands of Hugh [the Great] between the Loire and the Seine because they had not yet been given possessions inside the Gauls'.[3] Either Ragenold had left the North sometime before or he had been involved in the discussions with Hugh (and indirectly with Rodulf) but had pointedly been excluded from any land grant. Was this a divide and rule strategy on the Franks' part? Or had Rollo just done a deal for himself to the detriment of his erstwhile ally?[4] We will return to this matter later.

We can see that Rollo's Seine-based Northmen had held out for the grant of more land 'beyond the Seine'. King Rodulf and the Frankish magnates, most especially Hugh the Great, had finally agreed to this so as to get the Northmen out of their hair and out of northern Frankish lands, or even as many would suggest to detach Rollo from Charles's cause, to which hitherto Rollo had seemingly been loyal.[5] But it was Hugh the Great and not Rodulf or the other Frankish magnates from north of the Seine who had paid the price. Hugh had in fact earlier in the same year been granted the county of Le Mans by Rodulf,[6] and his remit or power also extended in northern Neustria all the way to the Channel.[7] Simply put, it was Hugh's lands which were being conceded to the Northmen, and there can be little doubt that he had only agreed to these

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 24; *Annals*, p. 12.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] In personal correspondence P. Bauduin says: 'Si je vous comprends bien, Rollon et Ragenold auraient été alliés mais aussi des rivaux en compétition, et le fait pour les Francs, de ne pas avoir donné à Ragenold les territoires qu'il espérait à l'ouest de la Gaule aurait poussé ce dernier à attaquer en Bourgogne.' This is correct and it is exactly what I propose.
[5] D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London and New York, 1982), pp. 9-10; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 146.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 20; *Annals*, p. 11.
[7] Cf. É. Van Torhoudt, 'La résistance franco-bretonne à l'expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954): une marche de Normandie?', p. 605: 'Son influence s'étendait jusqu'aux rivages de la Manche'; *idem*, *Centralité et marginalité en Neustrie et dans le duché de Normandie*, vol. 1, p. 174.

concessions through gritted teeth and under heavy pressure from Rodulf and the other Frankish magnates such as Herbert of Vermandois and Archbishop Seulf of Reims whose northern Frankish lands had been bearing the brunt of the recent Scandinavian incursions. Hugh doubtless also saw it as a temporary measure, which was soon shown by his actions. In the short term the land grant to Rollo's Northmen did not prevent them in the very next year, 925, from 'breaking the treaty to which they had formerly agreed'.[1] They attacked Picardy and devastated the *pagi* of Beauvais (dep. Oise) and Amiens (dep. Somme). They then moved on to Noyon (dep. Oise) which they plundered and set fire to the town's suburbs. According to Flodoard Noyon's garrison troops joined with the inhabitants of the suburbs and drove off the Rouen Northmen, killing some and freeing part of the suburbs. Immediately after this Flodoard says: 'Meanwhile, the men of the Bessin [*Bajocenses*, which lay in Hugh's domain] raided the land of the Northmen on the other side of the Seine.'[2] Clearly the people of Bayeux did not want anything to do with Rollo's Northmen and they seem to have got in a pre-emptive strike.[3] Other Franks too soon joined in this attack on Rollo's core land. Having heard of the attack of the men of the Bessin, the men of Paris joined with some of Hugh's *fideles* plus Hugh's own garrison troops and some men from his *castella* and wasted 'a part of the *pagus* of Rouen

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 29; *Annals*, p. 13. I do not propose here to explore why the Rouen Northmen 'broke the peace' in 925. P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 37, suggested that either they had been incited to do so by Ragenold or perhaps they considered the defeat suffered by their Scandinavian brothers on the upper Seine (for which see below) had morally tainted them as well. W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 49, pointed out that there is not the slightest evidence that Ragenold had incited or encouraged the Rouen Northmen to break the peace made and he suggested simply that the Rouen Northmen's own recent success in being granted the counties of Bayeux and Le Mans by Hugh, coupled with the 'glücklich abgelaufene Zug' (of Ragenold), had emboldened them to make further conquests, although whether we should really view Ragenold's expedition and raids as 'glücklich abgelaufen' is rather debatable given his army's losses and their lucky escape from a Frankish encirclement. A third possibility is that as with the grudging grant of parts of Brittany and the *pagus* of Nantes to Ragenold by Robert, Hugh's father, in 921, the grants of the counties of Bayeux and Le Mans were also quite illusory, and they had only been made because of the persistent demands of the Rouen Northmen for more land 'on the other side of the Seine', and at a time when King Rodulf was ill and beset with problems and challenges elsewhere. As noted already, Hugh the Great was the main player in these grants and he was the one who paid the price. It is quite possible that the Rouen Northmen had realised fairly quickly that the Franks in these areas had no intention whatever of being annexed by them (as was quickly proved to be the case), they thus 'broke the peace' they had recently made and started to attack areas in northern Francia (north of the Seine), a direction of interest that was to totally absorb them for many decades to come, well into the time of Rollo's grandson Richard I. Another idea, that is not in contradiction to what has just been said, is that Rollo's Rouen Northmen were just reverting to their former loyalty to Charles and by attacking into Herbert of Vermandois' territory they might have been trying to get Herbert to release Charles? But this whole question deserves fuller attention.

[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 30; *Annals*, p. 13. É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 174: 'Cette concession provoqua la colère de la population de Bayeux. Les *Bajocenses* dévastèrent l'année suivant [925] les terres des Normand au-delà de la Seine. Ils entraînèrent les Parisiens qui, avec Hugues le Grand, fils de Robert, ravagèrent le pagus de Rouen'.

[3] É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 174: 'L'adhésion des habitants du Bessin à Hugues le Grand n'est pas fortuite. Elle découle des rivalités politiques franques et de l'hostilité à la politique d'abandon territorial, cautionnée d'ailleurs par Hugues le Grand lui-même en 924 (ce revirement prouve le peu de valeur et de sincérité des « concessions » territoriales franques, aussi vite accordées que dénoncées).'

possessed by the Northmen on this [northern/eastern] side of the Seine.'[1] It had been Hugh the Great who, with King Rodulf's 'approval' but clearly under pressure, had made the grant of his lands of Bayeux and Le Mans to Rollo the year before. He now obviously regarded the peace and the grant as a dead letter - because Rollo had attacked core Frankish lands once again.

Hugh and his troop's determined two-pronged attack on Rollo's land along the lower Seine, provoked though it might have been by Rollo's attacks north of the Seine - but not actually anywhere into Hugh's sphere of influence - suggests a couple of things. First, Hugh had possibly thought better of his grant to the Rouen Northmen and used the chance offered by them making raids to the north-east to try to recapture their small core territory and thereby prevent them from making any move to make his concessions a reality. Second, it seems that the Rouen Northmen had made no attempt to move either to Bayeux or to Le Mans, their sole effort and ambition was expansion towards Picardy which was to remain the case for him and his son for several decades.[2] The concession of Bayeux and Le Mans remained an inconsequential dead letter.[3] Le Mans remained in Frankish hands well into the eleventh century,[4] as did Bayeux, at least for a couple of decades.[5]

Ragenold in Neustria and Burgundy: 924-925

To return to Ragenold, it will be remembered that in 923 after his setback at Arras he and his men withdrew to their previously established camps, but Flodoard says that he had continued his raids thereafter, still in Francia there can be no doubt. It is apparent that Ragenold had not got anything from Charles the Simple and he had suffered some significant loss of men. Why then would he have immediately gone back to the Loire whilst he was still a major irritant to King Rodulf and his allies? I have suggested that he had stayed on until he picked up his part of the tax raised by Rodulf in early 924 to pay off ('made peace with') the Northmen, or even

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 30: *Annals*, pp. 13-14.
[2] For which see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 145-52.
[3] É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 174: 'L'autre partie de la concession royale, le Maine, qui Raoul avait donné à Hugues le Grand en 924, ne fut pas réalisé non plus.'
[4] For the immediate and longer-term control of Le Mans see in the first instance J. Boussard, 'Les destinées de la Neustrie du IXe au XIe siècle', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 11. 41 (1968), pp. 15-28, and all the references contained therein.
[5] The first time we hear of Bayeux being under the Northmen's control is in 945 when Flodoard, *Annales*, p. 98; *Annals*, p. 42, tells us that 'the Northman Harald' was in command of the town. It should not be assumed as is often done that either Richard I of Rouen or even his father William Longsword had appointed Harald to command Bayeux, but even if he had there is simply no evidence that any Northmen controlled Bayeux before the early 940s.

perhaps until the negotiations which led to the concession of Le Mans and Bayeux to Rollo, whether or not he actually took part in them.[1]

Whatever the case, Ragenold did eventually move on because by the end of the year he was already raiding into Burgundy, Rodulf's home territory. If, as seems most likely, the grant of the districts of Bayeux and Le Mans was made to the Rouen Northmen what might have happened is that for some reason the Frankish magnates led by Hugh the Great (and perhaps King Rodulf himself) had not wished or felt able to offer Ragenold similar territorial concessions. Had Rollo just struck a deal for himself to the detriment of his compatriot and close ally Ragenold? It would not be the first or last time such a thing happened. That this might have been the case is strongly suggested by Flodoard who tells us that immediately after the grant of Bayeux and Le Mans 'Ragenold with his Northmen laid waste the lands of Hugh, between the Loire and the Seine, because they had not yet been given possessions inside the Gauls'.[2] This very clearly implies that Ragenold had actually asked for such 'possessions' but had been refused. Perhaps the fact that Ragenold had recently been based on the lower Loire, an area in Hugh's and his father Robert's Neustrian marquisate, plus the fact that only three years before Hugh's father Robert had been humiliated by the Loire Northmen - almost certainly already led by Ragenold - and forced to make significant concessions meant that Hugh particularly despised and resented these Northmen and wanted to see the back of them for good, a result he was to try to accomplish in 927, although once again like his father before him without success.

Ragenold's attacks into Hugh's territory in 924 suggest that these were acts of spite or revenge on his part. If Hugh and the other Franks would not give him more lands 'in the Gauls' then he would just hurt them enough to get some reward. And such a reward he certainly swiftly got. Ragenold's attacks seem to have gone far enough west and south because they threatened William II of Aquitaine as well. According to Flodoard: 'William [II of Aquitaine] and Hugh [the Great], son of Robert, made a security pact for their lands (*de sua terra securitatem paciscuntur*) with Ragenold, and Ragenold and his Northmen set out into Burgundy.'[3] In other words Hugh and William had paid Ragenold off to get him and his men out of their territory. We do not know from where Ragenold had begun his laying waste of Hugh's lands between

[1] W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 44, also thinks Ragenold left at this time: 'Als nun Raginold seine Genossen [Rollo etc.] von der Seine durch neue Ländereien bereichert sah, während er selbst keinen Kampfpreis davontragen sollte, nahm er im Herbst 924 die Verheerungen wieder auf und fiel die Loire aufwärts ziehend in Hugos Machtbereich zwischen Seine und Loire ein'; as does P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 33.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 24; *Annals*, p. 12.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 25; *Annals*, p. 12.

the Loire and the Seine. It is usually assumed that he started from his base on the Loire having returned there sometime a little before from Francia,[1] but it is also possible that he had come overland from the north never having returned to the lower reaches of the Loire in the interim at all; this is an issue to which we shall return.

By early December 924 Ragenold was in Burgundy.[2] 'When the year 925 began, Ragenoldus with his Northmen devasted Burgundy' says Flodoard.[3] Ragenold had clearly felt very aggrieved at being left out of the negotiations which led to the concession made to the Seine-based Northmen in 924 (many of whom he had just led),[4] and he had decided to seek retribution by raiding Hugh's heartland in Neustria. Yet how are we to explain Hugh's response? He had not confronted the Northmen attacking his territory, but rather in league or concert with William II of Aquitaine the Northmen had been directed towards Burgundy, or at least they had not hindered Ragenold from going there, and Burgundy was the heartland and powerbase of Rodulf. It is highly likely that Hugh and William had also had to pay Ragenold a significant payment to get his withdrawal; although Flodoard does not mention this such 'security pacts' were usually accompanied by such a payment.

There are two main interpretations. Yves Sassier[5] argues that Hugh had once again been left on his own to defend his territory. Rodulf was still away in Burgundy dealing with the revolt of one of his rivals and he showed not the slightest inclination to come to Hugh's aid. In addition, Herbert of Vermandois was in the North holding a synod of bishops of the province of Reims at Trosly-Loire[6] where he, 'fait figure d'unique porte-parole du roi et de chef du pays'. Sassier very rightly says that Hugh had already paid dearly for the 'peace' with the Rouen Northmen by conceding them the county of Le Mans which belonged to him. Thus, Hugh appreciated neither being obliged to confront Ragenold's army alone nor the possibility of being hemmed in between Rodulf and Herbert, an alliance which could risk great damage to Robertian interests in Francia. He showed this by taking an action loaded with meaning: he negotiated with William of Aquitaine so that Ragenold and his Northmen ceased their pillaging in Neustria and Aquitaine[7] and let them head for Burgundy. In Sassier's opinion the fact that the next year, 925,

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[1] For example P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 33, says: 'A la tête d'une nombreuse armée, il [Ragenold] remonte le cours de la Loire'; W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 44.
[2] The date of 6 December is given by P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34; W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 45; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 379.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 26; *Annals*, p. 13.
[4] Were some of the Rouen Northmen still with him when he went to Neustria and then Burgundy?
[5] Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, pp. 96-97.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 25; *Annals*, p. 12.
[7] Whether these devastations had actually reached into Aquitaine south of the Loire is unknown. But the attacks had certainly threatened or could threaten William II's Aquitanian territory.

Herbert had reclaimed and obtained the important archbishopric of Reims for his son had *sans doute* definitively convinced the Robertian that the alliance between the house of Vermandois and the Burgundian royalty [Rodulf] had ruptured the traditional equilibrium of forces in Francia. It is probable, says Sassier, that Hugh held a grudge against King Rodulf for having acceded to the demands of the goaler of Charles the Simple (Herbert of Vermandois) because almost immediately 'le Robertien entreprend de mettre sur pied son propre système d'alliances'. Now being a widower in 926 Hugh married Eadhild, the sister of king Æthelstan of Wessex and of *Ogive* (Eadgifu) the latest wife of Charles the Simple.[1] These actions signify for Sassier a double warning for Rodulf and Herbert: Hugh was seeking to prevent a durable grip of the house of Burgundy on the royal throne by kindling an alternative for the future of the kingship of West Francia in the person of Charles's exiled son Louis.

The political element of this marriage is also highlighted by Pierre Bauduin who says: 'Ce sont […] des raisons politiques qui ont motivé le mariage d'Hugues le Grand avec Eadhild, sœur d'Orgive, en 926, à un moment où se resserre l'alliance entre le roi Raoul et Herbert de Vermandois.'[2]

A somewhat different theory was espoused by Philippe Lauer[3] who maintained that Ragenold had been excluded from the negotiations leading up to the concessions of 924 made to Rollo's Northmen 'grace à l'habileté des seigneurs francais' and that Ragenold, who was disgusted with his successive failures,[4] wanted a *revanche éclatante*. He thus led his large army up the course of the Loire and pillaged its left bank. The two *seigneurs* on either side of the river, Hugh and William, feared for their possessions and separately entered into negotiations with Ragenold. Lauer admits that these negotiations are obscure. Nevertheless, he suggests that Ragenold had contented himself with just demanding free passage across these already exhausted lands to reach the rich and still intact Burgundy, whose *duc/roi* Rodulf had already shown himself to be an ardent antagonist of the 'Northmen of the Seine' and had brought war

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[1] For this marriage see: S. Sharp, 'England, Europe and the Celtic World: King Æthelstan's Foreign Policy', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, lxxix (1997), pp. 197-220, esp. pp. 206-9; *eadem*, 'The West Saxon tradition of dynastic marriage: with special reference to Edward the Elder', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder, 899-924* (London and New York, 2001), pp. 79-88; S. MacLean, 'Making a difference in tenth-century politics: King Athelstan's sisters and Frankish queenship', in P. Fouracre and D. Ganz (eds.), *Frankland: The Franks and the World in the Early Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Dame Jinty Nelson* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 167-90.

[2] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 153. It is quite likely that Eadgifu, Charles the Simple's wife, had a hand in arranging this marriage.

[3] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, pp. 32-35.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 33. I presume Philippe Lauer means by this his defeat in Arras, his failure to get anything from Charles the Simple and his exclusion from the land grant made to the Rouen Northmen.

into their territory.[1] Lauer further conjectures that Ragenold's aim was 'to show the usurper *Raoul* [Rodulf] that if the Northmen of the Seine had accepted to lay down their arms, he, *Rögnvald* [Ragenold], having received no satisfaction at all, was in no way disposed to imitate their example; and that he intended to make the Franks pay dearly for his retreat, and that even the remoteness of Burgundy was not sufficiently distant to shelter it from the Northmen's reprisals'.[2]

Looking at things from the Frankish side, Lauer argued that it was the *témérité* of such an attempt that perhaps explains the ease with which Hugh and William had not bothered Ragenold's force and let it direct itself to Burgundy - where King Rodulf was not present at the time.[3] It is, says Lauer, surprising that 'these two powerful vassals' had resolved, through ego and indifference, to let the Northmen pillage the domains of their sovereign. He thus rather supposes that it was all a tactic (*tactique*) on their part to set a trap (*piège*) for the Northmen when they got to Burgundy. If this were not so, Lauer adds, one cannot see any other reason for Hugh and William's actions other than a laxness contrary to their feudal duties. That William and Hugh had intended such a trap is, according to Lauer, demonstrated by what follows; meaning Ragenold's 'defeat' by the Burgundian magnates in late 924 at Chalmont, and his and his men's lucky escape from the upper Seine at little later[4] - matters we will cover shortly.

Both Sassier's and Lauer's interpretations regarding the reasons for Hugh's (and William II's) actions, or lack thereof, are possible, although as with all assessments of protagonists' intentions over a millennium ago neither is provable. I tend towards Yves Sassier's view. It does seem that Hugh the Great had only conceded his recently-acquired territory of Le Mans, and also Bayeux, to the Rouen Northmen under pressure from Rodulf and some other northern Frankish magnates and his concessions were, as was noted earlier, probably only made through gritted teeth and in bad faith, and were seen by him as just a temporary expedient. It has been suggested that this was so is demonstrated by the fact that in the next year, 925, Hugh and his allies had tried to try to wipe out the Rouen Northmen, or at the very least tried to prevent them from making his territorial concessions a reality - which they quite successfully did. Furthermore, by opening discussions in England and then marrying Eadhild, King Æthelstan's half-sister, in 926 Hugh does seem to have been thinking of putting in place new alliances and raising the spectre of a possible return of Charles the Simple's son Louis from England; a return

[1] *Ibid*., p. 33.
[2] *Ibid*. My translation.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*.

that ultimately was to take another ten years to achieve - after Rodulf's death - and once again this return was engineered by Hugh himself. In this context Hugh's actions in directing Ragenold's Northmen out of his Neustrian territory and into Burgundy in about October 924 do seem to have been a laxness in feudal duties, to use Lauer's words, but a completely understandable one on the part of Hugh the Great. In regard to the Aquitanians, they had never accepted Rodulf's legitimacy. They had no intention of recognising Rodulf as king and it was not until he managed to pull off a surprising victory in the Limousin over the then Loire-based Northmen in 930, when, at least for a time, 'the king [Rodulf] made the Aquitanians submit themselves to him'.[1] In terms of William of Aquitaine's attitude and actions in 924, it would thus appear to be somewhat anachronistic and missing any recognition of the tenuous and contested nature of Rodulf's territorial power and reach in the early years of his reign to see William's actions as a laxness in his feudal duties - the Aquitanians acknowledged no such feudal duties towards the Burgundian 'usurper' Rodulf. Aquitaine had been attacked and hurt by Ragenold's Northmen in early 923, and their lands to the south of the Loire had been affected or at least threatened by Ragenold again in 924. William's decision to treat/negotiate with the Northmen in 924 (and no doubt buy them off), whether this was done in conjunction with Hugh the Great or separately, and get them to move on to the Burgundian heartland of Rodulf, who they did not recognise, makes complete sense. Ultimately, I think we should put to one side Lauer's contention that William of Aquitaine was complicit and in league with Hugh the Great and King Rodulf in preparing an elaborate plot or trap for Ragenold's Northmen in Burgundy.

Let us now follow Ragenold and his men into Burgundy and from there then back to the Seine. Following Flodoard's comment about Ragenold and his Northmen's devastation of Burgundy at the start of 925, but which actually started in the last months of 924, he then tells of what happened in great detail, which perhaps suggests that he had received some first-hand report from someone who had witnessed these events. I will quote Flodoard in full:

> When the year 925 began, Ragenoldus with his Northmen devastated Burgundy. Count Warnerius [of Troyes and Sens], Manasses [of Dijon], Bishop Ansegisus [of Troyes], and Bishop Gozcelinus [of Langres] joined forces to oppose them at Mons Calaus and killed more than 800 of the Northmen. However, Count Warnerius was captured and killed when the horse on which he was mounted was killed, and Bishop Ansegisus of Troyes

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 930: *Annales*, p. 45; *Annals*, p. 19. For the situation in Aquitaine during these years see *inter alia* L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 453-76; A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, pp. 60-68; J. Dhondt, *Étude sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France (IXe-Xe siècle)* (Bruges, 1948), pp. 217-18.

was wounded.[1] When King Raoul [Rodulf] learned of this,[2] he set out to Burgundy with certain soldiers from Francia, that is, from the church of Reims, along with Bishop Abbo of Soissons and a few others who escorted him, including Count Herbert [of Vermandois]. When he collected a substantial number of soldiers from Burgundy, he advanced to the fortified camp of the Northmen on the river Seine, where there was a struggle fought on foot. When the Northmen saw that those who were with the king, that is, the greatest part of the army, made no effort either to capture their camp or even to dismount, they came out of their camp to fight. After suffering losses, the Franks broke off the engagement and laid out their camp in a circular pattern two or three miles away from the camp of the Northmen. Hugh [the Great], the son of Robert, laid out his camp on the opposite bank of the Seine. Thus, from day to day the Franks were delaying establishing a close siege of the Northmen's encampment as they awaited ships to come from Paris. However, with the complicity of some of our men, as it is said, the Northmen broke out of their camp and sought the cover of a certain forest to shield their movement and some of our men returned home.[3]

In summarising what had happened at *Mons Calaus*, Philippe Lauer says: 'Tandis que Rögnvald pénétrait dans la Bourgogne, pillant tout sur son passage, les comtes Garnier de Sens, Manassès de Dijon, avec les évêques Josselin de Langres et Anseïs de Troyes, prévenus peut-être sous-main par le marquis Hugues,[4] avait ressemblé leurs vassaux. Ces seigneurs se portèrent à la

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 27; *Annals*, p. 13. Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 49, pp. 122-23, tells the same story but puts the number of Northmen killed at *Mons Calaus* at 960. In two of the manuscripts of Flodoard's *Annals* the number is given as 900, see P. Lauer (ed.), *Flodoard*, *Annales*, p. 27, n. h. More interestingly, Richer of Reims says that the Northmen had invaded 'inner Burgundy' (*interiores Burgundiae partes*) after they had 'violated their agreement' (*fide violata*). It is difficult to ascertain which fidelity the Northmen had supposedly violated. Richer does not mention the 'pact' made with Hugh and William the year before (as had Flodoard), he had, however, and immediately before this, referred to the levy of general tax to pay a tribute to the Northmen in 924 and the *pacis pacto* then agreed with the Northmen (in the North) after which the Northmen 'withdrew to their own territory' (*in sua concedunt*). Whilst we should not place too much faith in Richer here, does his report perhaps hint at the possibility that the tribute paid to the Northmen in 924 had been paid both to the Rouen Northmen and to Ragenold as I have suggested earlier is quite possible?

[2] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 49, pp. 122-23, has Rodulf being at Soissons when he heard the news of the Northmen's invasion of Burgundy and of their defeat at *Mons Calaus*. This is based on Flodoard's report *s.a.* 924 that after being ill Rodulf had gone for a month to St-Rémi at Reims to recuperate, after which 'he went to the *urbs* of Soissons before returning to Burgundy': Flodoard *s.a.* 924, *Annales*, p. 23; *Annals*, p. 12. This move to Burgundy from Soissons happened somewhat earlier in 924 but by about October Rodulf was back in Francia. We do not know if he had gone back to Soissons but this could have been the case because in very late 924/early 925 when Rodulf heard the news about *Mons Calaus* he then 'set out to Burgundy with certain soldiers from Francia, that is, those from the church of Reims, along with Bishop Abbo of Soissons […].': see Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annals*, p. 13.

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, pp. 26-29; *Annals*, p. 13.

[4] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 33. Here we see Lauer's plot and trap again.

rencontre des Normands qui se retiraient vers la France du nord, chargés de butin. Le choc eut lieu sur les confins du Gâtinais, à Chalmont, le 6 décembre.'[1] Elsewhere Lauer had argued the case for *Mons Calaus* being located at Chalmont (comm. Fleury-en-Bière, arr. and cant. Melun, dep. Seine-et-Marne) close to the left back of the Seine rather than at some other suggested places, which are nevertheless all in the same vicinity.[2] Who had 'won' this encounter? Lauer does not commit himself, saying just: 'La lutte fut acharnée. Il s'agissait pour les Normands d'assurer leur retraite, et les Bourguignons étaient décidés à leur faire expier les ravages qu'ils avaient faits chez eux.'[3] We are told by Flodoard that more than 800 Northmen were killed, but Lippert says 'der Verlust der Burgunder war viel beträchtlicher' ('the loss of the Burgundians was more significant') as shown by the amount of the Burgundians killed or wounded.[4] All we can say is that this combat was not decisive and both sides lived to fight another day. After this fight at *Mons Calaus* Ragenold and his army continued their retreat along the valley of the Seine where they then stopped on the banks of the upper Seine and made a temporary encampment. Lauer would place this camp in the region of the confluence of the Seine and the river École, near present-day Ponthierry.[5]

In the meantime, King Rodulf had been collecting a force together from Reims and Soissons, which even included Herbert of Vermandois,[6] to which Rodulf then added 'a substantial number of soldiers from Burgundy',[7] whether these were just those who had fought at *Mons Calaus* (Chalmont) or included others is not known. After arriving near the Northmen's camp sometime in the first two months of 925 Flodoard reports that these men of Francia and Burgundy then 'made no effort either to capture [the Northmen's] camp or even to dismount'.[8] So the Northmen stormed out of their camp to fight. The Franks suffered losses and broke off the fight (they probably fled) and then quickly threw up a circular camp of their own two or three miles from the Northmen's camp.[9] It might have been at this moment that Hugh the Great arrived

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[2] P. Lauer (ed.), Flodoard, *Annales*, pp. 26-28, n. 6.
[3] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34.
[4] W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 45 and n. 1. Some later 'Burgundian' sources suggest the Burgundians' losses were high; see for example the *Chronicle of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens* (*Chronicon Sancti Petri Vivi Senonensis*). See also P. Lauer (ed.), Flodoard, *Annales*, p. 28, n. 6.
[5] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 28; *Annals*, p. 13. Why P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34, says that Herbert 'resta prudemment à l'arrière-garde, toujours prêt à tirer parti des événements' is a mystery to me. Richer of Reims says that three days after hearing of the fight at *Mons Calaus* Rodulf 'issued a royal decree ordering recruits to be assembled from Burgundy [actually from *Gallia citerior* which is Richer's rendering of Flodoard's *Burgundia*]. When they had assembled, he led them and several of the magnates against the enemy forces on the Seine': Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 49, pp. 122-23.
[7] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 28; *Annals*, p. 13.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.*

with his army on the opposite bank of the Seine - no doubt on the right or northern bank. Flodoard says that 'thus from day to day the Franks were delaying establishing a close siege of the Northmen's encampment as they awaited ships to come from Paris'.[1] These awaited ships would have been Hugh's because Paris was in his domain. The ships would have been needed to transport Hugh's men across the river and to ensure that a siege or encirclement could be attempted, which included the river side of the Northmen's camp.[2] But before the knot could be tightened the Northmen managed to break out from their camp and make their escape. Flodoard says that he had heard that this breakout had only been possible 'with the complicity of some of our men'.[3] Flodoard is, as ever, prudent and circumspect in not mentioning the names of these traitorous Frankish men. One might ask who might have reaped some benefit from letting Ragenold's Northmen escape? The Northmen hid their escape by using the 'cover of a certain forest'.[4] We will return to this point later.

Where did Ragenold's Northmen then go and what became of him and them? To try to answer these questions we first need to look at the *déroulement* and chronology of Ragenold's attack on the monastery of Saint Benedict at Fleury on the Loire.

Ragenold's capture of the monastery at Fleury

Writing at Fleury in 1005,[5] the monk Aimoin included a detailed story of Ragenold's capture of his monastery in his misleadingly named second book of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict*.[6] I summarise Aimoin's story as follows:[7] Countless Northmen over whom Rainald (*Rainaldus*) had obtained royal authority came all the way up to the upper Loire in many longships. They

[1] *Ibid*. P. Lauer (*Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34) here brings back his idea of a trap: 'Rögnvald était pris au piège où sa témérité l'avait conduit.'
[2] In personal correspondence Pierre Bauduin observes, 'C'est une des très rares entreprises navales des Francs contre les Normands'.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 29; *Annals*, p. 13.
[4] *Ibid*. P. Lauer (ed.), *Flodoard*, *Annales*, p. 27, n. 6: 'On comprendrait très bien que les Normands, après avoir parcouru la Bourgogne en pillant, se fussent, établis sur cette colline de Chalmont, pour résister aux attaques des Bourguignons: qu'après un rude combat, gagnant le Nord, ils eussent atteint la rive gauche de la Seine vers le confluent de l'École, pour y camper. La suite s'explique alors parfaitement. Bientôt ils furent cernes de tous côtés : au Nord et à l'Ouest par les hommes d'armes venus de *Franci*a, au Sud et à l'Est par le roi Raoul et les Bourguignons. Hugues le Grand, se trouvant sur la rive droite de la Seine *hac ex parte*, de ce côté-ci de la Seine par rapport à Reims, où écrivait Flodoard, ne pouvait prendre contact avec eux, et attendait des navires « de Paris » pour traverser le fleuve. Les Normands auraient été ainsi immanquablement anéantis, s'ils n'étaient parvenus à s'échapper vers l'Ouest à travers les bois, en profitant des hésitations et du manque d'entente de leurs adversaires, qui les assiégeaient presque de toutes parts.'
[5] A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, p. 184.
[6] The reason I say it is misleadingly named is that Aimoin's book 2 like Adrevald's book 1 before him is not mostly about miracles but more about 'history'. A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, p. 192, says: 'Comme Adrevald, et encore plus que lui, Aimoin a traité son sujet en historien.'
[7] Aimoin of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 2, chap. 2, pp. 96-98.

were marauding about and devastating everything along the Loire. Finally, they arrived at Saint Benedict's monastery at Fleury. This was their third visit. When they attacked, they found the monastery deserted of inhabitants and all necessary things, only the buildings remained. On their approach the monks had fled to a distant refuge which had earlier been prepared for them by their pious abbot Lambert, taking the body of Saint Benedict with them as well as all the moveable wealth of the community. The Northmen's 'king' Rainald learned of this from his captives. So Rainald and his men installed themselves in the buildings and dormitories of the monastery which they then used as a base for a while, during which time, being pagans as they were, they committed outrages/debaucheries. Until one night while Rainald was sleeping Saint Benedict appeared before him, accompanied by two monks. One was a strong middle-aged man, the other a child. The saint, his head covered with snow-white hair and holding a bishop's crozier/staff (*baculum*), addresses Rainald asking him what he, Benedict, had done to cause Rainald to come here and bring troubles to his settlement and that of his children (the monks). He tells Rainald that he intends to stop his future projects and how he would bring back tranquillity to the servants of Christ and to his own bones. Having said these words Benedict struck Rainald's head with the staff (crozier) that he had in his hand and predicted his coming death in the near future. The saint then disappeared. Rainald was so disturbed by this vision that he called out in a loud voice for his guards to come to his aid. They came rushing. Rainald told them of his vision and of the blow Benedict had inflicted to the top of his head which had caused him great pain and how Benedict had threatened him with death. Rainald then ordered that all his Northmen immediately leave the buildings they had invaded and return to their home soil. He left with them. When they got back to their *patria*, Rainald, suffering great pains and tortures, suddenly gave up his life and died. On his death a great storm suddenly got up which uprooted tall trees, ripped off roofs, broke the chains holding the Northmen's captives, broke the tethers of the horses and other animals who fled in all directions, and this up to a distance of twelve miles from the town of Rouen (*intra duedecim et eo amplus miliaria a Rotomagensi urbe*).[1] Then Aimoin says that he had been told that a tumulus of stones shaped like a pyramid which had been built over Rainald's grave was destroyed by an earthquake. The soil had rejected his body from its bosom. Seeing that the earth had rejected his body Rainald's cadaver had to be placed in a sack full of stones and submerged 'in the Seine' (*in Sequanam*).[2]

[1] *Les miracles de Saint Benoît. Miracula sancti Benedicti*, eds. and trans. A. Davril *et al*, pp. 204-5.
[2] *Ibid*.

Aimoin continues his story by telling of how after the death of this impious man his memory would have been lost had not the old monks of Fleury had carved a marble effigy of Rainald's head and inserted it into the north wall of the church of the Holy Mary mother of God. It was to remind future generations of the destruction caused by this abominable man and how God wreaked terrible vengeance on his enemies.[1] Finally, Aimoin ends by saying that the Northmen had been so frightened by God's vengeance that in the future among all the saints of Gaul they most feared 'our father Benedict'. It is also implied that they never returned to Fleury, which is true as Aimoin would well have known.[2]

Of course, in this story we find many common hagiographical elements: a holy saint appearing in a vision; the prophecy of the future death of a pagan; a great storm portending momentous events, and even an earthquake spitting out a profaner's body. But when we strip away these miraculous elements we are left with some most interesting historical information. The Northmen's leader, indeed 'king', is repeatedly called by his name, *Rainaldus*. His fleet had navigated up river to the upper Loire (*ad superiora Ligeris*) pillaging as it went until it arrived at Fleury. This was the third attack on the monastery. They sojourned in the monastery's buildings and dormitories for a while, from where they committed more outrages. After Rainald's vision they left for their *patria* which was possibly on the Seine probably at or near Rouen. It was 'on the Seine' that Rainald died and was buried, seemingly in the not-too-distant future.

We should take Aimoin's story extremely seriously. Aimoin was very well informed about the history of his monastery; he even wrote a now lost history of its abbots as well as a biography of his friend and mentor the abbot Abbo of Fleury.[3] In summing up his discussion of Aimoin as a conscientious and reliable writer Alexandre Vidier says: 'Combien d'hagiographes du Moyen Age ont montré cette honnêteté?'[4]

The information Aimoin presents in his continuation of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* is unique and must surely have been told to him by elders of the monastic community, who he talks of as being some of his informants, and Aimoin was of course an important member of

[1] Mabillon said the monks of Fleury still showed this effigy in his time, cf. Aimoin of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 2, chap. 2, p. 98, n. 1.
[2] Since writing this a new and very welcome French translation of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* has recently been published: *Les miracles de Saint Benoît. Miracula sancti Benedicti*, eds. and trans. A. Davril *et al*; this has been referenced and quoted from on several occasions earlier in the present study. The long passage outlined above (from book 2, chap. 2) can be found on pp. 204-7; Davril's French translation does not really differ much from my own précis here.
[3] A. Vidier, *L'historiographie à Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire*, pp. 83-84.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

this community. However, there are some difficulties in placing this attack both chronologically and within its appropriate historical context.

We might start with the name. The general consensus among historians is that Aimoin's *Rainaldus* is Flodoard's *Ragenoldus/Regenoldus*.[1] The first question we must therefore pose is this: Was Rainald really Ragenold?

First, we should look at the form of the name used by Aimoin: *Rainaldus*. Earlier is his *Miracles* Aimoin uses the same name to designate the Rainald who was the count of Herbauge and then of Nantes in the 830s and early 840s, and of course it is not at all a coincidence that Aimoin's predecessor Adrevald of Fleury had used the same spelling for this person in his 'first book' of *Miracles*, as in fact did most writers in the ninth and later centuries.[2] However, other ninth-century sources referred to this same person as Reginardus, Reginoldus or Ragenaldus.[3] There is also much other evidence that names such as Rainaldus and even Raino are equivalent to the Germanic names beginning with *Regin*, so Raino for instance is probably the same name as Regino, much as Einhard is the same as Eginhard,[4] and Rainald count of Herbauge probably had sons called both Raino (=Regino?) and Ragenald.[5] Other onomastic evidence to this effect could be cited. Therefore, it seems clear that Aimoin's Rainaldus was a Latinised Frankish rendition of the more Germanic name Reginald/Ragenald, a name which is clearly cognate with the Gaelicised name Ragnall in Ireland and the Anglicised name of Rægnald/Rægenald and similar in England, and which later was rendered as Røgnvaldr/Rögnvaldr in Old Norse, and hence it refers to Flodoard's Ragenold/Reginold.[6]

Next, Aimoin tells us that Rainald's (hence Ragenold's) Northmen had navigated their many ships to the upper reaches of the Loire, hence to Orléans and then the short distance to Fleury. We might confidently infer from this that they had come from the lower Loire. The fact that we

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[1] See, just for example, P. Lauer, ed., Flodoard, *Annales*, p. 29, n. 1; *idem*, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 35; W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, pp. 47-48.

[2] With some slight variations such as *Reinholdus* or *Rainardus*, for which see J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine', p. 64, n. 205, and p. 70; see also *idem*, *L'extension du ressort politique et religieux du Nantais au sud de la Loire : essai sur les origines de la dislocation du 'pagus' d'Herbauge (IXe siècle-987)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Paris-Sorbonne, 1981).

[3] In the Astronomer's *Vita Hludovici Imperatoris*, the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* and the *Gesta Aldrici*, see J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine', p. 64, n. 205.

[4] See, for example, K. F. Werner, 'Les premiers Robertiens', p. 16 and n. 46; see also p. 29. Lupus of Ferrières, *Correspondance*, ed. L. Levillain, p. 98, calls him *Reinoldus*.

[5] J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Le duché du Maine', p. 70.

[6] Rather surprisingly H. Prentout, *Étude critique*, pp. 188-89, suggested that *Rainaldus* was a disfigured form of Rollo. J. Lair, *Le siège de Chartres par les Normands (911)* (Caen, 1902), pp. 29-30, n. 2, makes 'king' Rainald into a *chef* associated with Rollo who came to Fleury before Rollo who then disavowed Rainald's excesses. Both of these are wrong in different ways; they are ultimately based on another one of Dudo of Saint-Quentin's fanciful stories (cf. Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 160-62; trans. Christiansen, pp. 41-43) about Rollo's followers making an expedition into Burgundy and his coming to Fleury. I hope to show in a future article that Rollo never did this at any time and from where Dudo took his story, a story also taken up and modified by Hugh of Fleury.

know that the expedition into Burgundy was led by Ragenold, who we know had already been operating on the Loire and in Aquitaine for a while before moving on to Francia, where he was joined by and actually commanded many of the Rouen-based Northmen, might also support the assumption that it was Ragenold who had come to Fleury, for a 'third time' as Aimoin quite rightly says.

Yet what can we say about the date of this attack and occupation? Woldemar Lippert stated that it was after Ragenold's foray into Burgundy, after his and his men's lucky escape from the Seine in early 925, and during their retreat from there that they came to the monastery of Fleury.[1] Similarly Philippe Lauer interpreted Flodoard's comments that after the Northmen had broken out from their almost besieged camp on the Seine they 'sought the cover of a certain forest to shield their movement' as meaning: 'Et maintenant l'aventureux et habile viking [Ragenold] gagnait rapidement les bords de la Loire, à travers la forêt d'Orléans.'[2] He then suggests: 'Peut-être est-ce au cours de cette retraite mémorable que les sectateurs d'Odin pénétrèrent dans l'abbaye de Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire.'[3] So here, and once again, placing Ragenold's arrival at Fleury in 925. Yet if they had arrived at Fleury by ship from the lower Loire, as Aimoin says they did, how could they have been Ragenold's Northmen withdrawing on foot across country from the upper Seine in 925 as proposed by Lippert and, on this occasion, by Lauer? In fact, they could not have been if we are to believe Aimoin's testimony. Both Lippert's and Lauer's assumption that after escaping from possible annihilation by the combined Frankish forces Ragenold and his men had gone back to the Loire is just that, an assumption, no doubt implicitly based on the idea that Ragenold was always a 'Northman of the Loire' and so must always have returned to his Loire base.

The conclusion seems clear. Ragenold did not capture Fleury in 925, this must have happened at another time.

Most interestingly in his edition of Flodoard's *Annals* which was published in 1905, five years before his 'biography' of Robert and Rodulf appeared, Lauer had a very different opinion. After mentioning Lippert's view that Ragenold had pillaged the monastery of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire whilst returning from the Seine in 925, he commented: 'Nous croirions plutôt que c'est en allant en Bourgogne [in 924], *ou bien les années précédentes*'[4] when 'Rögnvald's' Northmen visited Fleury, as told of by Aimoin.[5] This must in my view be correct.

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[1] W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, pp. 47-48.
[2] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 35
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] My italics.
[5] P. Lauer, *Flodoard*, *Annales*, p. 29, n. 1.

Aimoin reports that 'Rainald's' pillage of Fleury took place when Lambert was the abbot - which he was between 898 and about 930.[1] Lippert stated: 'Die Erwähnung Abt Lambert veranlasst, Aimoins Bericht in die ersten Jahre Rudolfs zu setzen und mit diesem Zuge in Verbindung zu bringen',[2] thus from 923 onwards. This is a somewhat circular argument. In terms of years before 925 we know that before Ragenold had moved north at the request of a desperate Charles the Simple in 923 the Loire-based Northmen, most probably already led by Ragenold, had raided into Aquitaine and the Auvergne earlier the same year. It is conceivable that they had commenced this expedition into Aquitaine and the Auvergne by an attack on Fleury, although I would rather doubt this because starting from Nantes or the lower Loire such a long detour makes little geographical or logistical sense if one's objective is to make raids into Aquitaine and from there into the Auvergne. If Ragenold had been the chieftain of the Northmen since (at least) *c*. 918/919-920 when they had arrived in Brittany and Nantes, as seems likely, then the Fleury attack could just as well have taken place in 920, 921 or 922. The monastery of Fleury near Orléans was right in the heart of Robert's huge Neustrian marquisate and Robert had come in 921 to besiege the Northmen who were operating on the Loire - unsuccessfully as it turned out. An attack on Fleury not long after the Northmen arrived on the lower Loire might well have been a factor prompting Robert to try to get rid of them, or perhaps after Robert's failure and his granting them a free hand in Nantes and in Brittany Ragenold had felt emboldened to go in search of richer pickings along the upper Loire?

Perhaps it is of some relevance that Aimoin says that before arriving at Fleury *Rainald* (Ragenold) had been plundering the whole of the upper Loire, and that whilst at Fleury he and his fighters had used the buildings of the monastery as a base from which they could commit further outrages. This raid up the Loire was no quick thing, it must have lasts weeks if not months. As already mentioned, it is most likely that Ragenold left northern Francia sometime in 924, either just before or just after the concession of Le Mans and Bayeux to the Rouen Northmen. He was disgusted and no doubt incensed that he had yet to be granted lands inside 'the Gauls' (that is in Francia or Neustria), as Flodoard put it, for all his efforts. He then 'laid waste' the lands of Hugh between the Loire and the Seine, hence in Neustria itself. Certainly, after leaving Francia Ragenold could well have sailed all the way back to his previous base on the Loire and from there started his attacks into Hugh's territory between the Loire and the Seine, and then, after treating with, and likely having been paid off by, Hugh the Great and

[1] Abbé Rocher, *Histoire de l'abbaye royale de Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire* (Orléans, 1865), p. 108.
[2] W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 48, n. 1.

William II of Aquitaine, which probably happened in October,[1] moved into Burgundy, which is the scenario implicitly assumed by some historians, for instance by Philippe Lauer who states as though it is a fact: 'A la tête d'une nombreuse armée, il [Ragenold] remonta le cours de la Loire en pillant la rive gauche du fleuve', after which he moved on to Burgundy.[2] However, given the likely chronology, it might seem to be pushing credulity a little to imagine that in this short time window Ragenold had managed to sail all the way back to the Loire from northern Francia, row/sail up the length of the Loire, devastate all of the upper Loire as he went and then spend a reasonable time at Fleury causing more desolation in the vicinity, and all before meeting with Hugh and William (whether separately or not) in October.

Had these raids been made overland from Francia (without the fleet or only using the fleet to first travel up the Seine) then Ragenold's subsequent attack into Burgundy in late 924 might in fact not have been presaged by a long trip up the Loire, which if this had been so would exclude that Fleury was attacked in late 924 on the way to Burgundy. Of course, the fact that both Orléans itself and the monastery at Fleury were both in Hugh's territory, plus the fact that the Loire was the border between Hugh's Neustria and William's Aquitaine, might on the other hand suggest that the attack on Fleury did take place in 924.

Finally, another piece of evidence from Aimoin of Fleury does seem to point to either 921 or 922 for the third attack on Fleury. After telling the story of *Rainald* (Ragenold) and Fleury, Aimoin starts his very next paragraph with the word *Interea* (meanwhile) and then launches straight into how Robert had had himself crowned king (in 922) and the battle at Soissons (in 923).[3] This I suggest provides some additional slight circumstantial support for a dating of 921 or 922.

Ultimately though we simply cannot ascertain with any certainty whether Ragenold's Northmen came to Fleury in 924 or earlier, in say 921 or 922. This is unfortunate because if we could be more certain it might enable us to make more sense of a final detail of Aimoin's story. As was seen earlier, Aimoin in typical hagiographical fashion has Ragenold having a vision whilst asleep in which Saint Benedict foretells his coming death for the sins he has committed. After this vision Ragenold called together his men and told them that they must quit Fleury and return to their own *patria*. Aimoin clearly indicates that this *patria* was at or near Rouen on the Seine, where he says Ragenold died in agony for some unspecified reason - but implicitly as a

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 25; *Annals*, p. 12. This is from where this report is placed in the *Annals*. Cf. also A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 379.
[2] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 33.
[3] Aimoin of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 2, chap. 3, pp. 98-99.

chastisement for daring to despoil Saint Benedict's monastery. That Aimoin had heard from someone the news that Ragenold had returned to the Seine at or near Rouen and there met his death is, if we place any faith in his testimony which I do, of the utmost importance for our enquiry.

We have already established that Ragenold had had a much closer connection or relationship with the Rouen, or Seine-based, Northmen than is usually acknowledged. He had after all taken command of the Rouen Northmen after his move to Francia in 923. In addition to this, even after suffering a setback near Arras later in 923 Ragenold and his army had remained in the area north of the Seine for some time, making further raids - as Flodoard tells us he (and they) did - until he left Francia most likely sometime in late summer or in the autumn of 924 to make his expedition into Burgundy - whether this was made partly overland directly from Francia or whether it was via the Loire as is usually proposed. What is more Flodoard gives substantially more attention to Ragenold and his activities in these early years of the 920s than he does to Rollo who he only first mentions by name in 925.

Does this not suggest that Ragenold was much more deeply involved in, and important for, the activities of the Seine-based Northmen at this time than historians of early Normandy usually give him credit for? Or might it even suggest some sort of close earlier connection between Ragenold and the Seine Northmen?

After Ragenold's Northmen had suffered some serious losses at the hands of the Burgundian magnates in December 924 at *Mons Calaus* (Chalmont) on the borders of Burgundy and Francia, Flodoard tells us that when King Rodulf heard of this he set out to Burgundy with certain soldiers from Francia, from the church of Reims, plus with the men of Bishop Abbo of Soissons and some others who escorted him, including Herbert of Vermandois. Rodulf then collected a substantial number of soldiers from Burgundy and advanced to a fortified camp of the Northmen on the river Seine,[1] possibly as Lauer suggested around the Seine's confluence with small river École. This is where a Frankish encirclement nearly happened, but did not quite, but from which Ragenold's army had managed to escape. In my opinion what there can be little or any doubt about is that after his raids into Burgundy Ragenold was retiring *vers la France du nord*.[2] As Hubert Guillotel in my view rightly says, after retreating from Burgundy Ragenold's army was probably returning to Rouen when they were caught and attacked by the Franks on the upper Seine.[3]

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 924: *Annales*, p. 28; *Annals*, p. 13.
[2] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 34.
[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 379.

Interestingly in Richer of Reims's reporting of these events, which were derived at their heart from Flodoard's *Annals* but possibly elaborated on by Richer's father and others, he has the Northmen who had managed to escape the Frankish encirclement on the Seine, 'some on foot others by ship',[1] reassembling and then gathering at Eu 'one of their coastal strongholds'.[2] The Frankish attack on the Northmen's stronghold at Eu (dep. Seine-Maritime) happened a little later in 925 after Rodulf had left Burgundy for Francia 'in order to prepare for war against the Northmen'[3] and is described in great detail by Flodoard.[4] According to Pierre Bauduin, Flodoard may have gleaned this detailed information from some of the men of the church of Reims who had participated in the siege.[5] This attack on the Northmen's stronghold at Eu is generally regarded as solely a matter concerning the Rouen Northmen and their *princeps* Rollo, who is here mentioned by Flodoard for the very first time when he sent 1,000 Northmen from Rouen to reinforce the inhabitants (also Northmen no doubt) already in the *oppidum* of Eu[6] who were being attacked, or were soon to be attacked, by Herbert of Vermandois 'with the men of the church of Reims', with Arnulf the count of Flanders.[7] It could well be that in reading Flodoard's account Richer had simply jumped to the conclusion that the Scandinavian survivors from the attempted Frankish encirclement on the Seine had then eventually regrouped at Eu (very likely after Ragenold's death), but we cannot exclude the possibility that this is what actually happened. However Richer came to his view this was certainly his view.[8] As Hubert Guillotel says, by retreating from Burgundy by the valley of the Seine Ragenold's army had

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[1] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans., Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 49, pp. 124-25. He adds that in their escape from their camp on the Seine 'some were burned up along with their camp, while about three thousand of them fell to the sword' This number of 3,000 dead is most likely a misinterpretation by Richer of Flodoard's '*duobus vel tribus millibus*', cf. P. Lauer (ed.), Flodoard, *Annales*, p. 28 and n. 3.
[2] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans., Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 49, pp. 124-25.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 31; *Annals*, p. 14.
[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, pp. 31-32; *Annals*, pp. 14-15. For the importance of Eu for cross-channel maritime traffic at the time, see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 155 and n. 58. Bauduin notes that 'aux mains des Normands, il [Eu and the Talou] représentait une menace sérieuse pour les *maritimi Franci*'.
[5] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 155.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 925: *Annales*, p. 31; *Annals*, p. 14.
[7] *Ibid*.
[8] Richer of Reims (*ibid*.) assumed that Flodoard's report that Rollo had sent 1,000 men to reinforce the garrison at Eu meant that Rollo was in charge there. He says, perhaps rather confusingly, but referring very explicitly to Ragenold's escapees from the Seine (although he never names Ragenold preferring his usual designation of 'pirates'), that 'their leader Rollo installed a garrison of sufficient strength in this stronghold [of Eu] and made preparations for war'. He then tells of the siege and taking of Eu. Originally at this point Richer had Rollo dying during the battle for Eu: 'Rollonem oculis effossis, suggillant', 'they strangled Rollo after gouging out his eyes'. Later Richer realised his mistake and crossed this sentence out (cf. *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, p. 405, n. 105), but he left in the original section heading: 'Rollonis pyratae interitus, suorumque ruina'. Of course, Rollo did not die at Eu (as Richer no doubt saw in Flodoard's *Annals s.a.* 928 which also concerns Eu), and, following Flodoard, he was not even there. In my view Richer's changing story here, where he does not name Ragenold (so often mentioned by Flodoard), and seems to initially replace him by Rollo, is an early example of what Dudo of Saint-Quentin did repeatedly: notably replacing the deeds of many other Northmen in France (including Ragenold) by Rollo. But at least Richer seems to have changed his mind when he discovered otherwise.

probably had the intention to 'rejoindre Rouen'.[1] If we are to believe Aimoin of Fleury's testimony Ragenold's Northmen were on the Seine at or near Rouen when he died. Who led them thereafter? Given Ragenold's obvious close connection with the Seine Northmen it is not completely out of the question that the survivors of his army had indeed gone to Eu, perhaps they were by now under Rollo's command and maybe even among the one thousand reinforcements Rollo sent to Eu?[2] Both are possible but rather unfortunately we can and will never be able to be sure. The idea remains hypothetical.

Whatever the case, 925 is the last time we ever hear of Ragenold. If we are to believe Aimoin of Fleury he died in agony at or near Rouen on the Seine - possibly even of wounds he could have sustained in escaping from the attempted Frankish encirclement on the upper Seine? But this is speculation. Hubert Guillotel says that Ragenold 'mourut comme il avait vécu',[3] which he probably did.

Where had Ragenold come from?

Thus far the activities of the Northmen in France under the leadership of Ragenold have been explored and interpreted. As with other Northmen before him Ragenold and his men had made raids into Aquitaine from a base or bases on the lower Loire, but they had also been active along the coasts of Brittany and in northern Francia where Ragenold very obviously had some close connection with the Seine-based Northmen.

There is no evidence that the Northmen who first appeared raiding along the Breton coasts in *c*.919 (or even slightly before) had been based anywhere in Brittany or western Gaul in the immediately preceding years. As was shown in the previous chapter the Northmen who had attacked and burned the Breton monastery at Landévennec in late 913 had then moved on to the Severn Estuary in England in 914, then to Dyfed in South Wales and from there to Waterford in Ireland before some of them moved on to Northumbria.

However, who was Ragenold and where had he come from? The paucity of the historical record will never enable us to be sure, but he and his fleet had not just appeared out of thin air, they had a history. All we can do is look at some plausible possibilities.

There seem to be two realistic options: Either Ragenold and his fleet came from the Irish Sea zone which might be extended to include, at least, western Northumbria, or he had come

[1] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 379.
[2] This event at Eu in 925 is the first time Flodoard names Rollo**;** previously he had named Ragenold several times.
[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 379.

from the Seine region where Rollo had recently been granted a limited area by Charles the Simple, supposedly in 911. These two options are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Let us start with the name. If we exclude the many historical and semi-legendary Rögnvaldrs (to use one form of the Old Norse name found in later Norse sagas connected with Norway, Iceland, the Orkneys and even Ireland), the earliest Scandinavian chieftain we know of with this name in any reliable source is a Ragnall/ Rægnald/Rægenald who arrived in Northumbria in *c*.918 from Ireland, fought at the battle of Corbridge and then became the Scandinavian 'king' of York from 919 before apparently dying in 921.[1] Ragnall/Rægnald was a descendant or 'grandson' of the famous Dublin chieftain Ímar' (the *Uí Ímair*) who had died in 873, as discussed in the previous chapter. Next, we have the Ragnall/Rægnald the son of Guthfrith the king of Dublin until 934. Guthfrith himself was the brother or cousin of the first mentioned Ragnall/Rægnald. This second Ragnall/Rægnald came to York from Dublin at some time before 943, he was 'confirmed' by King Edmund in 943, and he even had coins minted in his name, some with the inscription REGNALD CVNVNC.[2] But by the next year he and his cousin Anlaf Sihtricsson had been chased out of Northumbria by King Edmund who then annexed Northumbria. Continuing with the clan or descendants of Ímar, another of his 'grandsons' was Sitruic/Sihtric, often bynamed Gále or Cáech, who had come from Dublin to York in *c*.921. He married King Æthelstan's's only full sister Eadgith in 926 but he died the next year, possibly after apostacising, and the Scandinavians lost control of York until 939. Sitruic/Sihtric had a son called Anlaf (ON Óláfr/Áleifr Sigtryggsson), sometimes bynamed Cuarán, who ruled or co-ruled York for a short time before being expelled, along with his cousin Rægnald Guthfrithsson, by King Edmund in 943 - he went back to Dublin and ruled there for a long time before dying in 980. Anlaf Cuarán also had a son called Ragnall who died fighting the Irish at the battle of Tara in 980. Then there is another son or grandson of an 'Ímar' called Ragnall who died fighting the men of Leinster in 995.[3] Yet another Ragnall, who was a Scandinavian king of Waterford and who died in 1018, also had a son called Ragnall who died in 1035. To which

[1] For all the Scandinavian chieftains mentioned hereafter and their activities see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*; *eadem*, 'Eric Bloodaxe-axed?'; *eadem*, 'The Chronology of the Last Scandinavian Kings of York, AD 937–954', *Northern History*, 40. 1; K. Halloran, 'The War for Mercia, 942-943', *Midland History*, 41. 1 (2016); *idem*, 'Anlaf Guthfrithson at York: A Non-Existent Kingship?', *Northern History*, 50. 2 (2013); A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*; *idem*, 'Amlaíb Cuarán and the Gael', *Medieval Dublin III* (Dublin, 2002), pp. 34-44; C. Etchingham, 'The battle of Cenn Fúait, 917'; S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine: The mystery of the pagan king Setric'; *idem*, 'Vikings on the Ribble: Their Origin and Longphuirt', in which all the necessary sources and references can be found.

[2] For these coins see C. E. Blunt, B. H. I. H. Stewart, C. S. S. Lyon, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England*, pp. 211-34.

[3] He might have been the son of the Scandinavian king of Waterford called Ímar (*fl.* 969-1000), but see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 56 and n. 227.

we might add a possible brother of the last king of York Eric who according to Roger of Wendover was called Reginald (*fratre Reginaldo*) and who purportedly died with his brother and his nephew Henry (*Henrico*) at Stainmore in Westmorland in 950.[1] There are other Ragnalls/Rægnalds or similar we could mention, all operating in the British Isles at a later date.

It is not really necessary to fully understand all the complicated familial and other relationships between all these Ragnalls/Rægnalds and their kin in Ireland and northern England to ask if 'our' Ragenold in France from *c*.918-919 to *c*.925 might have been related to them in some way. After all, as was shown in the previous chapter, the last raid on Brittany in 913 had very clear connections with these same Irish Sea-based Northmen. Joëlle Quaghebeur certainly thinks so: 'L'homme qui intervint en Bretagne était, peut-être, un membre de cette parentèle';[2] but with exemplary academic caution she concludes her analysis of some of these family-related names and events in both the British Isles and Brittany by saying: 'Situer, au sein de ces parentèles les Scandinaves connues en Bretagne apparait difficile, mais il convient de souligner que leur origine norvégienne est là encore probable et que les principautés d'Irlande et de York apparaissent également mentionnée.'[3] Quaghebeur believes that there was some family connection but hesitates to propose it categorically.[4] But as she says in the same article about the second decade of the tenth century: 'Les déplacements successifs de la flotte d'*Óttar* et de *Hróaldr* (Bretagne, Pays de Galles, Irlande) laissent entrevoir que ces confins maritimes et les mers bordant étaient alors devenus une *Mare Normannorum*.'[5]

Names do, of course, run in families, and just in regard to Ímar's clan or 'dynasty' in Dublin and York from the first half of the tenth century besides the many Ragnalls/Rægnalds we find the names Sigtryggr (Sitriuc/Sihtric), Guðrøðr (Gothbrith/Gothfrith/Gofraidh/Guðferþ), Áleifr/Óláfr (Amlaíb, Anlaf/Onlaf), plus, of course, others with the name Ívarr (Ímar). Other Scandinavian chieftains operating in Ireland (for example in Waterford and Limerick) in the later tenth century also bore similar names and many of these were possibly also related to Ímar's clan.

For our purposes the first attested Scandinavian chieftain with this name in the Irish Sea zone was the Ragnall 'grandson of Ímar' who defeated *Bárid mac Oitir* in a naval fight off the Isle

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[1] Roger of Wendover, *Rogeri de Wendover Chronica, sives Flores historiarum*, ed. H. O. Coxe, 4 vols (1841-42), vol. 1, p. 402.
[2] J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', p. 121.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 122.
[4] Although I tend to agree with Quaghebeur's tentative conclusion I cannot, however, agree with some of how she gets there. She places too much emphasis on the conventional but erroneous distinction between 'Norwegians' and 'Danes', and she uses late and unreliable Norse sagas. Nevertheless, her main point regarding the possible relationship between Ragenold in France and the Northmen in York and Ireland with the same name is well made.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 126.

of Man in 914.[1] And it is of greatinterest to note that the name appears nowhere else in any reliable source other than in the British Isles (including Ireland) throughout the ninth and tenth centuries; not in France, not in Frisia and not in Denmark,[2] until the Ragenold we are discussing first appears in Brittany and on the Loire and at the same time as Ragnall, the 'grandson' of Ímar, was ruling at York and then dying in the north of England.[3]

Referring to the important battle at Wednesfield near Tettenhall in Staffordshire in 910, where Northumbrian-based Scandinavians were defeated by the Mercians and the West Saxons, when we hear the names of two Scandinavian 'kings', Eowils and Halfdan, and other jarls killed,[4] Clare Downham quotes David Dumville as suggesting 'that the kings mentioned in 910 were also members of the same family (the descendants of Ívarr) who ruled Dublin before 902 and after 917', and then she adds 'the coincidence is perhaps too striking to be ignored'.[5] Have we a similar striking coincidence here? If, and it is a big if, Ragenold was in some way related to all these Insular Scandinavian kings or chieftains bearing the same name then who might he have been?

In 1911 in a highly flawed but still very interesting article titled 'Ragnall Ivarson and Jarl Otir' Sir Henry Howorth explored the matter.[6] Having followed in some detail the career and exploits of Ragnall, 'grandson' of Ímar, from the first mention of him in 914 in the Irish Sea until his death in 921, as reported in the *Annals of Ulster*, and supposedly at York, Howorth then suggests that this notice of his death is much exaggerated: 'As a matter of fact, he [Ragnall]

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[1] *AU* 914.4.

[2] I deliberately exclude the legendary story of a Ragnall and his sons in the so-called *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* (cf. *FAI*, ed. Radner, §330, pp. 118-21). Although this story is often linked with the second Scandinavian expedition to Spain from *c*.858/59 to 861, and even on occasion, quite wrongly, with the legendary Ragnar Lothbrok, I will demonstrate in a future study that this story is a *bricolage* probably composed in an Orcadian/Norwegian/Icelandic milieu at a much later date, and thus it is not reliable information regarding any Ragnall in the mid-ninth century. But even if it were it too points to the Irish Sea zone. I am also excluding the semi-legendary Norwegian *Rögnvaldr Mærajarl* we find in Snorri Sturluson's thirteenth-century *Heimskringla*, and the *Rögnvaldr heiðum hæri* found in the so-called *Ynglingatal* (also only reproduced in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*), where the Norwegian scald Pjóðólfr of Hvinir grafts his patron Rögnvaldr (purportedly a cousin of Harald Finehair) onto the stem of the more prestigious *Ynglingar* dynasty of Uppsala.

[3] The *Annals of Ulster* do not say where Ragnall died, but it must have been in or near York.

[4] *ASC A*, ed. Bately, p. 63; *ASC B*, ed. Taylor, p. 47; *ASC C*, ed. O'Keffe, p. 73; *ASC D*, ed. Cubbin, p. 38. Æthelweard (*Chronicon*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell, IV. 4, p. 53) adds another king called Hinguar. MS *D s.a.* 911 [=910] says: 'Her bræc se here þone frið on Norðhymbrum, 7 forsawon ælc riht þe Eadweard cyning 7 his witan him budon, 7 hergodon ofer Myrcland. 7 se cyning hæfde gegaderod sum hund scipa, 7 wæs þa on Cent, 7 þa scipu foron besuðaneast andlang sæ togeanes him. Þa wende se here þæt his fultum wære se mæsta dæl on þam scipum, 7 þæt hi mihton unbefohtene faran þær þær hi woldon. Þa geahsode se cyning þæt, þæt hi on hergeað foron, þa sende he his fyrd ægðer ge of Westseaxum ge of Myrcum, 7 hy offoron þone here hindan, þa he hamweard wæs, 7 him wið þa gefuhton, 7 þone here geflymdon, 7 his feola ofslogen, 7 þær wæs Eowilisc cyng ofslægen, 7 Healden cyng, 7 Ohter eorl, 7 Scurfa eorl, 7 Aþulf hold, 7 Agmund hold.'

[5] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 87.

[6] H. H. Howorth, 'Ragnall Ivarson and Jarl Otir'.

no doubt soon after this [921] left the British Isles to resume[1] his career in the West of France, where he probably had ambitions to rival the doings of Rolf the Ganger [*sic*=Rollo],[2] who had founded a new state in Neustria.'[3] Howorth then follows Ragnall [Ragenold] from the Loire into Francia and then into Burgundy, and he mentions his attack on Fleury and his subsequent death at Rouen.[4] Of course there are many occasions when a medieval leader's death, or even a more modern leader's death, is much exaggerated, but the main problem[5] with Howorth's reconstruction is that we simply cannot dismiss the report in the reliable *Annals of Ulster* that 'Ragnall grandson of Ímar, king of the fair foreigners and dark foreigners' had died in 921.[6]

Based partly on the (probably erroneous) idea that there were two battles at Corbridge in Northumbria, one in *c*.914 and the other in 918,[7] both involving a chieftain *Rægnald* as he is called in English sources,[8] some historians have suggested that there were in fact two Ragnalls/Rægnalds. One, *Rægnald*, operating in Northumbria/York, and the other, *Ragnall*, operating in the Irish Sea zone - both in the second decade of the tenth century.[9] But it does

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 12. It is not clear whether Howorth means by 'resume' that Ragnall had been in France before or whether resume just means continue, I think the first is more likely.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 12. Like others before and since Henry Howorth assumes that the 'Rolf the Ganger' of much later Norwegian/Icelandic histories/sagas was Rollo, which is dubious to say the least. For a very insightful analysis of this whole subject see L. Irlenbusch-Reynard, *Rollon: de l'histoire à la fiction. État des sources et essai biographique* (Brussels, 2016).

[3] H. H. Howorth, *ibid*., p. 12, has 'the overwhelming of Brittany' in 919 being undertaken by 'the Danes of the Loire', for which there is no evidence, and that it was these 'Danes' who were granted Brittany and Nantes by Robert [the marquis of Neustria] in 921 (*ibid*., p. 15).

[4] But then Howorth (*ibid*., p. 17) references G. Lestang's *Dissertation sur les incursions normandes dans le Maine* (Le Mans, 1855), p. 47, n. 1, and suggests *Rotomagnus* as found in Aimoin of Fleury's second book of *Miracles of Saint Benedict* might mean *Pont de Ruan* [dep. Indre-et-Loire] in the Touraine and that this is where Ragenold might have died, which is rather ludicrous given that Aimoin clearly places Ragenold's death on the river Seine, and it also makes no geographical sense.

[5] There are very many other problems with Henry Howorth's reconstruction.

[6] *AU* 920 [=921].4. C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 10, comments: 'Smyth dated Ragnall's death to 920 and attributed AU's 921 date, after Sitriuc's departing Dublin in 920, to delayed knowledge of developments at York. Misdating by a year would be quite untypical of AU, however, and the contexts in which the verbal noun *déirge* is used suggest that the annalist knew why Sitriuc had left, while he affected to rejoice that it was *per potestatem diuinam* 'by divine power'. Was this the same "power" that prompted the glee of St Cuthbert's hagiographer at what must have been Ragnall's premature death? One may surmise that Ragnall's demise was anticipated and that Sitriuc moved early to secure the succession.'

[7] Most fully expounded by F. T. Wainwright, 'The Battles at Corbridge', in *Scandinavian England*, ed. H. P. R. Finberg (Chichester, 1975), pp. 163-66, but followed by A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian York and Dublin*, vol. 1, pp. 63-64. The idea comes from two reports of battles at Corbridge in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, ed. and trans. T. Johnson-South, pp. 60-63.

[8] To use the spelling as found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. In the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* he is called Regenwald and in the *Historia regum Anglorum* Reingwald.

[9] A. Campbell, 'Two Notes on the Norse Kingdom in Northumbria', *English Historical Review*, 57 (1942), pp. 85-97, at pp. 88-91; L. Abrams, 'The Conversion of the Scandinavians of Dublin', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 20 (1998) pp. 1-29, at p. 22: 'The identification of Ragnald of York with Ragnald of Dublin, the grandson of Ívarr, is not absolutely sure', and (p. 22, n. 145): 'The ruler of York may have been a different Ragnald', and, following Abrams, M. R. Davidson, 'The (non) submission of the northern kings in 920', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder. 899-924* (London, 2001), pp. 200-211, at p. 208. Essentially the idea is that because 'Ragnall the grandson of Ivar' was fighting a naval battle off the Isle of Man in 914 and arrived in Ireland in 917

seem clear that there was only one battle of Corbridge and that it happened in 918, after which York was taken in 919,[1] and that the Ragnall/Rægnald involved was the 'Ragnall grandson of Ímar' whom the *Annals of Ulster* report in 914 fighting a naval battle off the Isle of Man, coming to the harbour of Waterford in 917,[2] and who left Waterford in 918,[3] and 'fought on the bank of the Tyne in northern Saxonland', that is in 918 at Corbridge.[4]

But whilst the idea of two Ragnalls/Rægnalds in the Irish Sea and in Northumbria has now largely been discounted there was indeed another 'king' with the same name in France at roughly the same time - our Ragenold. If this Ragenold could possibly have been related to the family or clan of Ívarr (Ímar) then what relationship might this have been?

Ívarr (Ímar) had at least three sons, called Sigfrøðr (*Sichfrith mac Ímair*), Bárðr (Barith/*Barid mac Ímair*) and Sigtryggr (*Sitriuc mac Ímair*), who died in 888, 881 and 896 respectively.[5] He probably had daughters as well to whom some of his supposed 'grandsons' might have been born. One of his grandsons was also called Ímar who seems to have died when young making a raid in Pictland in 904.[6] Another called Áleifr/Óláfr (*Amlaíb ua Ímair*) was killed in battle in 896. A third called Rögnvaldr (*Ragnall ua Ímair*), died, as we have discussed earlier, in 921. Then there was Sigtryggr (*Sitriuc ua Ímair*, sometimes bynamed Gále or Cáech), who 'ruled' York as king between *c*.921 and his death in 927 and who had also married Edward the Elder's

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he could not have been the same person as the *Raegnald* who supposedly fought the 'first battle' of Corbridge in *c*.914.

[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 91-95; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 142-44. C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 10, says: 'Ted Johnson South, the most recent editor of the *Historia*, was surely right to conclude that the author spliced together "references to the same battle in two different sources" and thus "mistakenly created two battles of Corbridge". That the "two battles of Corbridge" result from hagiographical splicing is indicated by the fact that, between the two, the author gleefully reports the death of Ragnall, in miraculous punishment by St Cuthbert for the Viking king's misdeeds, notably in granting away ecclesiastical property.' That seems to be that regarding two battles at Corbridge, but still there were absolutely two Ragnalds/Ragenholds at this time, one in the British Isles and one in France/Brittany.

[2] *AU* 913 [=914].5; *AU* 917.2.

[3] For all these events in Ireland in these few years see C. Etchingham, 'The battle of Cenn Fúait, 917'.

[4] *AU* 917 [=918].4; 'The foreigners of Loch dá Chaech [Waterford harbour], i.e. Ragnall, king of the dark foreigners, and the two jarls, Oitir and Gragabai, forsook Ireland and proceeded afterwards against the men of Scotland. The men of Scotland, moreover, moved against them and they met on the bank of the Tyne in northern Saxonland. The heathens formed themselves into four battalions: a battalion with Gothfrith grandson of Ímar, a battalion with the two jarls, and a battalion with the young lords. There was also a battalion in ambush with Ragnall, which the men of Scotland did not see. The Scotsmen routed the three battalions which they saw, and made a very great slaughter of the heathens, including Oitir and Gragabai. Ragnall, however, then attacked in the rear of the Scotsmen, and made a slaughter of them, although none of their kings or earls was cut off. Nightfall caused the battle to be broken off', 'Gaill Locha Da Caech do dergiu Erenn, i. Ragnall rí Dubgall, & na da iarla, .i. Ottir & Graggabai & sagaith dóoib iar sin co firu Alban. Fir Alban dono ara cenn-somh co comairnechtar for bru Tine la Saxanu Tuaiscirt. Do-gensat in genti cethrai catha dibh, i. cath la Gothbrith ua n-Imair; cath lasna da iarla; cath lasna h-óc-tigerna. Cath dano la Raghnall i n-eroloch nad-acadur fir Alban. Roinis re feraibh Alban forsna tri catha ad-conncadur co rolsat ár n-dÍmar dina genntibh im Ottir & im Graggabai. Raghnall dono do-fuabairt iar suidhiu i l-lorg fer n-Alban coro la ar dibh acht nad-farcbath ri na mor-móer di suidibh. Nox prelium dirimit.'

[5] For all these supposed sons and grandsons see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*.

[6] See C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 261, and A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 129-34.

daughter Eadgifu in 925. Fifthly, there was Guðrøðr (*Gofraid ua Ímair*) who died in Ireland in 934 after an abortive attempt to take over from Sigtryggr (Sitriuc Gále or Cáech) at York in 927.

When we examine the dates of death of all these 'grandsons' or descendants of Ímair (*Uí Ímair*) and what we know of their activities before their deaths (and what we know of their possible fathers), they were probably all born in the period between the 870s and 880s, but just possibly some even in the 890s.[1]

By the early 920s Ragenold in France was already clearly a very powerful and important chieftain. He was called a 'king' by Flodoard, he had seen off the powerful marquis of Neustria in 921,[2] he had been called in to give assistance to Charles the Simple, he had enough authority to command the Rouen Northmen in 923, had negotiated with Hugh the Great and William II of Aquitaine in 924 and he had fought the combined Burgundian and Frankish forces on the upper Seine in 925. In his case if we tentatively assign a very wide margin for his likely age at the time, we might suggest he was at the very least 25 years old, and more likely older, let us say to be conservative he could have been aged up to 45. If so, this would place Ragenold's birth sometime between the 870s and the 890s. Whether or not he had any familial relationship with the 'grandsons' of Ímar (*Uí Ímair*) this would certainly put Ragenold in the same generation. If he was a member of this clan there is nothing to exclude the possibility that Ragenold too was a 'grandson' or relation of Ímar. This at least is one possibility. If this had been so then when might Ragenold had left Ireland or northern England for France? I assume, as do all historians, that he was already in command of the fleet that came to Brittany and Nantes in *c*.918-919, but he was most certainly in charge of the Loire-based Northmen by 923 at the very latest.

What happened immediately before 919? All we know of is the battle of Corbridge in 918 and the immediately subsequent capture of York by Ragnall, plus that Ragnall had come from Waterford harbour in Ireland. According to the *Annals of Ulster* at the battle of Corbridge in 918 the Northmen's army was divided into four battalions:

[1] Sigtryggr (*Sitriuc ua Ímair*) had several sons from a wife he had before he married King Edward the Elder's daughter in 925. According to the *Annals of Clonmacnoise s.a.* 931[=937], ed. Murphy, pp. 150-51, two of these sons (called *Auisle* and *Sichfrith*) were killed at the important battle of Brunanburh in 937, which would suggest Sigtryggr had been having children by the 910s, or in the early 920s at the very latest.

[2] I am assuming here that Ragenold had led the Northmen since they first arrived in Brittany in *c*.918-919, an assumption I discussed earlier.

> The heathens formed themselves into four battalions: a battalion with Gothfrith grandson of Ímar, a battalion with the two jarls (*cath lasna da iarla*), and a battalion with the young lords (*cath lasna h-óc-tigerna*). There was also a battalion in ambush with Ragnall, which the men of Scotland did not see. The Scotsmen routed the three battalions which they saw, and made a very great slaughter of the heathens, including Oitir and Gragabai. Ragnall, however, then attacked in the rear of the Scotsmen, and made a slaughter of them, although none of their kings or earls was cut off. Nightfall caused the battle to be broken off.[1]

The 'two jarls' were *Oitir* and *Gragabai,* both of whom the Ulster annalist had named immediately before and who were seemingly killed in the battle. But who were the 'young lords'? We really have no idea. It is not completely inconceivable that one of these lords was our Ragenold who after the battle, or after the capture of York, had then decided to continue his raiding career in France, but to suggest this would just be pure speculation or wishful thinking.

It could just as well be that 'our' Ragenold, even if he were related to the *Uí Ímair*, had been doing other things before his arrival in France; in fact he must have been.

It is generally, and very reasonably and rather obviously, suggested that after the Scandinavians' expulsion from Dublin in 902 many of their leaders dispersed. We hear of the chieftain *Ingimundr* first in Anglesey and then attacking Chester in the early years of the tenth century before he and his men settle in the Wirral.[2] The first Scandinavian settlements in Lancashire and Cumbria probably also took place at this time.[3] Additionally, and as discussed extensively in the previous chapter, it is also quite likely that the chieftain *Baret* (ON Bárðr) who, with Heric (ON Eiríkr/Hárekr) according to an early Frankish source, attacked Tours in 903 was the 'Irish-based' Scandinavian chieftain named as *Bárid mac Oitir* in the *Annals of Ulster* in 914 whom Ragnall grandson of Ímar killed in a naval engagement. Both Bárðr and his father Óttar were very unlikely members of Ímar's family but were rather members of a competitive Irish-based family.[4] The Ímar grandson of Ímar who died in Pictland in 904 might also have been one of the post-902 exiles from Dublin although according to Alex Woolf he

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[1] *AU* 918.4.
[2] For which see in the first instance F. T. Wainwright, 'Ingimund's Invasion', in *Scandinavian England*, pp. 131-62; S. Harding, M. Jobling, and T. King, *Viking DNA: the Wirral and West Lancashire Project* (Chester, 2010): S. Harding, *Viking Mersey: Scandinavian Wirral, West Lancashire and Chester* (Chester, 2010).
[3] See *inter alia* N. J. Higham, 'Northumbria, Mercia and the Irish Sea Norse, 873-926', pp. 21-30; *idem*, 'Viking-Age Settlement in the North-Western Countryside: Lifting the Veil?', pp. 297-311; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 84-85.
[4] See C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 25, 30-31, 36.

could have left Ireland a few years earlier.[1] And then there is *Ragnall ua Ímair*. What had he been doing before and shortly after his first appearance in the historical record in 914? In Nick Higham's view the exiled Irish Northmen had operated 'as many as five semi-independent fleets', but Rægnald's 'became the most important'. Higham also suggests that Rægnald's base in the years prior to 914, when we hear of him for the first time in the sources, was most likely on the river Ribble in Lancashire.[2] Alex Woolf suggests that he 'had dominated the western regions of Northumbria since at least 914'.[3] The Hebrides were also likely 'a major sphere of activity of exiles from Dublin'.[4]

Scandinavian chieftains were leaving Dublin (and perhaps elsewhere in Ireland) from at least 902, and possibly even from a few years earlier. We do not know much of their precise movements in the next decade or so but that they dispersed is clear. Clare Downham says: 'The Vikings who were expelled from Ireland divided into various groups. Some may have travelled to France. Others went to Britain.'[5] The attack on Tours in 903 by Baret and Heric was one such appearance of an Irish-based chieftain operating in France immediately after the expulsion of 902. It was argued in the previous chapter that Bárðr/Baret, at least probably, went back to a base on the Ribble where a lot of Carolingian coins, which were possibly booty taken during his raid on Tours, were buried at Cuerdale in *c*.905. And, as already mentioned, Nick Higham suggests that it was Ragnall/Rægnald who was in control of a Scandinavian base on the Ribble before 914, but perhaps not. In regard to the naval battle off the Isle of Man in 914 between Bárid son of Oitir and Ragnall grandson of Ímar, in which Bárid and nearly all his army died, Alex Woolf says:

> Were the two leaders both members of the Scandinavian oligarchy that had been settled in the region for a decade? Was one of them the effective ruler of the region and the other an intruder attempting to muscle in on his patch? If so, which was which? We can only really speculate, but if Ragnall was the successor to the leadership of that Ímar grandson of Ímar who had died in Albania in 904, and if Bárid was the son of the Earl Othere who had fallen at Wednesfield,[6] then this battle off Man may have been between Northmen

[1] A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 129-34.
[2] N. J. Higham, 'Northumbria, Mercia and the Irish Sea Norse', pp. 24-25, 27. See also S. M. Lewis, 'Vikings on the Ribble'.
[3] A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, p. 144. Woolf (*ibid*., pp. 140-41) also thinks that 'Ragnall was the successor to the leadership of that Ímar grandson of Ímar who had died in Albania in 904'.
[4] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 28. Cf. also A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian York and Dublin*, vol. 1, p. 61; D. Ó Corráin, 'The Vikings in Scotland', p. 336.
[5] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 27.
[6] For the complex of the various Óttars see the previous chapter.

> driven out of Scotland by Constantín seeking new hunting grounds in the Irish Sea, and the Hiberno-Norse settlers who had recently colonised the region. The Isle of Man itself […] may well have been the base from which the beachheads in Galloway, Cumberland and Lancashire were controlled.[1]

That both Bárid and Oitir were members of a rival family to Ímar's and the evidence that Bárid had returned to the Ribble (maybe even via the Isle of Man) provides some additional support for Woolf's theory.

If 'our' Ragenold in France was actually connected with the family or descendants of Ímar, the hypothetical possibility being explored here, then might he have been somewhere else in France before his appearance in Brittany in *c*.918-919?

The fact is that not long after their arrival in Nantes and Brittany and their raids further inland up to early 923 Ragenold's Northmen had then quickly gone to Rouen and Francia north of the Seine at the request of Charles the Simple. That Ragenold even took command of many of the Rouen Northmen is a striking fact which although it has been mentioned in passing by some historians its importance has failed to be recognised. As I have argued, in my view this clearly indicates that Ragenold must have had some previous dealings and relationship (not necessarily a familial one) with the Northmen of the lower Seine - those at Rouen specifically. Additionally, it seems that Ragenold had established some *munitiones* north of the Seine before 923.[2] Based on the long-held but erroneous view that the Northmen at Rouen were 'Danes' whilst those in the west of Gaul were 'Norwegians', J. Quaghebeur when discussing slightly later events says there were *rivalités intra-scandinaves* between the 'Norwegian' Northmen of the Loire and the 'Danish' Northmen of the Seine.[3]

Certainly, there were many cases of rivalries between different 'viking' groups in France as well as elsewhere, but the fact that Ragenold took command of some of the Seine-based Northmen in 923 would rather suggest some real previous link or connection between them rather than some stereotypical ethnic Norwegian-Danish rivalry. This is not the place to reopen the long-running and still unresolved question of the origin of both Rollo and his Northmen, a debate which is usually couched in terms of whether they were Danes or Norwegians. But it is often remarked that the *Planctus* of William Longsword, which was written sometime after his

[1] A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 141-42.
[2] As was argued earlier.
[3] J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', p. 130.

death in 942 and before 961, says quite clearly that William was born overseas: *transmarinus*.[1] It has already been commented on several times in this study that from a Frankish perspective the term *transmarinus* invariably means the other side of the English Channel; that is the British Isles and most often England. It is also interesting to note that apart from Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *De moribus* the only other so-called 'source' we have concerning Rollo's supposed involvement in the siege of Chartres in 911 (so it is said) is the *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père-de-Chartres*.[2] Of course this is derived in great part from Dudo's *De moribus*, but what is of most interest is that in it we are told that it was pagans from overseas (*pagani transmarini*) lead by Rollo who had crossed the sea and come to Neustria. Now Dudo himself has Rollo being in England, told in a typically very garbled account cobbled together from many real events which happened at different times and involved real Scandinavian chieftains other than Rollo. But many serious historians are willing to suggest that Rollo had indeed spent some time in England, or even the British Isles, before coming to the lower Seine - an arrival I would suggest happened in the first five years or so of the tenth century.[3] For example, and just for

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[1] *Complainte de Guillaume Longue Épée*, ed. J. Lair, *Étude dur la vie et la mort de Guillaume Longue-Épée* (Paris 1893), pp. 61-68; P. Lauer, *La règne de Louis IV*, pp. 319-23. The relevant part of this text reads, 'Hic in orbe transmarino natus patr. / in erore paganorum permanente. / matre quoque consignata alma fidem / sacra fuit lotus unda / cuncti flete pro uuilelmo': see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 132, n. 166. There is still a vibrant debate on the interpretration of the *Planctus* regarding the death of William Longsword. P. Bouet, *Rollon, Le chef Viking qui fonda la Normandie* (Paris, 2016), p. 86, argues that in the expression 'Hic in orbe transmarino natus patre' in the *Planctus* the adjective *transmarino* does not refer to *orbe* but to *patre*, and also that the adverb *hic*, signifying here 'ici' means that we should thus translate this passage as meaning: 'Il [William Longsword] était né dans ce pays-ci [la future Normandie] d'un père venu d'outremer et qui demeurait dans l'erreur des païens.' This whole idea was previously explored by P. Bauduin (*La première Normandie*, pp. 129-32), who on the basis of Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story makes William's mother be a certain Poppa, supposedly a daughter of 'Béranger, *prevalens princeps*' who was apparently captured by Rollo during his attack on Bayeux in 889-890 [*sic*] and who he later married; for which see also K. Keats-Rohan, 'Poppa of Bayeux and her family', *The American Genealogist* (1997), pp. 187-204, republished in French as 'Poppa de Bayeux et sa famille', in C. Settipani and K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (eds.), *Onomastique et Parenté dans l'Occident médiéval* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 140-53. We might also add that Ademar of Chabannes (*Adémar de Chabannes, Chronique*, ed. J. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 27, p. 148, MS A; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III, 27 (*β*), p. 148) says that: 'Tunc Roso defuncto, filius ejus Willelmus loco ejus praefuit, a puericia baptizatus, omnisque eorum Normannorum, qui juxta Frantiam inhabitaverant, multitude fidem Christi suscepit, et gentilem linguam obmittens, latino sermon assuefacta est.' This is translated by Y. Chauvin and G. Pon (*Adémar de Chabannes, Chronique*, p. 231) as 'Alors, à la mort de Rosus, comte de Rouen [note *comite Rodomense* is only found in MS C], son fils, Guillaume gouverna à sa place ; ce Guillaume fut baptisé dès l'enfance, et toute la multitude de ces Normands, qui résidaient près de la France, se convertir à la foi du Christ ; abandonnant la langue de sa nation, elle prit l'habitude du parler latin.' That William was supposedly baptised in his infancy (or youth) with a multitude of other Northmen who converted to the faith of Christ at some place *près (juxta)* to France is interesting. Where does *près* to France mean? But whether we should give any credence to Ademar's report here, written more than a century after the events, is doubtful to say the least. There is a huge amount more one could add on this subject, and indeed has been added, but even if we limit ourselves to Bouet's interpretation then William's father Rollo came from 'Outremer' which can only mean here the British Isles, or perhaps more specifically England.

[2] *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père-de-Chartres*, ed. B. Guérard (Paris, 1840), vol. 1, pp. 46-47.

[3] I am not very convinced by recent revisionist attempts to place Rollo's arrival at an early date. My opinion regarding a late arrival date is also that of David Douglas, Eric Christiansen and Jacques Le Maho, although it is not derived from them.

illustration, Pierre Bauduin says: 'On sait maintenant qu'une fraction notable des immigrants scandinaves venus en Normandie ont fait étape dans les îles Britanniques.'[1] If Ragenold and the Northmen later led by Rollo had some previous connection with England I would suggest the place to seek this is either in the complicated and obscure events involving the Danes in East Anglia and Northumbria and King Alfred's nephew Æthelwold between 899 and 905,[2] or perhaps a little earlier in connection with the two Scandinavian fleets that had arrived in southern England from France in 892,[3] some members of which, with other English-based Northmen, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says 'went south across the sea to the Seine' in 896.[4] If this is so, the suspicion arises that the Northmen later commanded by Rollo had perhaps known Ragenold and his Northmen in England in the early tenth century or even at the very end of the ninth century.

Another complementary option, which is not in any way in contradiction to what has just been said, is that Ragenold and his men had arrived in Brittany in *c*.918-919 from the lower Seine itself, and that they had been one (probably major) contingent of the various Scandinavian groups that had started to base themselves there from the last years of the ninth century onwards. Neil Price once wrote: 'For Brittany, the most dramatic consequences of Hrólfr's [Rollo's] agreement with the Franks [in 911] was that the most aggressive and ambitious of the Seine Vikings split off from the main group and sailed round the coast to the Loire. From this time onwards, Brittany was the focus of Viking raiding in France.'[5] Yet Price's excellent early work entitled *The Vikings in Brittany* contains one or two incorrect conjectures based on misinterpretations of the Northmen's presence in France, its chronology and their movements, particularly from the late ninth century until 919, and here Price is referring to some years before 919, in *c*.912 he says.[6] But the possibility that Ragenold had actually come to Brittany from the lower Seine (perhaps in about 918?) should not at all be ruled out; in fact I deem it very possible.

Finally, it has been assumed here that Ragenold was the leader of the Northmen who came to Nantes and Brittany in *c*.918-19. Most historians are of the same opinion. This, however, is not certain. Earlier, mention was made of the Danelaw chieftain Thurcytel who with many others left England for *Froncland* in *c*.916. I suggested that he and his fleet were likely to have

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[1] P. Bauduin, 'Chefs normands et élites franques', p. 187.
[2] *ASC A, D, s.a.* 899-905, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 92-95.
[3] *ASC A*, *s.a.* 893=892, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 84.
[4] *ASC A*, *s.a.* 897=896, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 89. We then hear of them thereafter in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast s.a.* 896-98, for which see Chapter 11.
[5] N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 40.
[6] This slightly earlier period is examined in Chapter 11.

gone to Francia or Neustria, maybe even to the Cotentin or the Bessin according to Lucien Musset, but we hear nothing more of him in France thereafter. Thus, there is the possibility that he and his fleet were involved in the capture of Nantes and the ravaging of Brittany in 918-19, whether in league with Ragenold or not. Or maybe Thurcytel arrived before Ragenold, in which case the latter's arrival on the Loire might have happened a little later? All I am doing here is very tentatively suggesting some plausible possibilities.

In conclusion, and trying to not always sit on the fence, what am I suggesting about Ragenold's origins? I do tend to think, as does Quaghebeur, that Ragenold was possibly somehow related to the 'dynasty of Ívarr' whose members were operating in both Ireland/the Irish Sea zone and in England around this time. But to my mind what is more apparent is that Ragenold must have had some sort of previous relationship or contact with some of the Northmen operating on the lower Seine before he arrived in Nantes/Brittany in about 918. This contact may have occurred around the lower Seine itself (or in Francia more generally) over the course of the preceding years, which, if so, would point to this area as his immediate origin. But there is also the possibility, hypothetical and based a series of 'ifs' though it all is, that this contact could, and in addition, even go back to England in the early tenth century, or slightly before at the end of the ninth century. Finally, we probably cannot completely exclude the possibility that one of the places where this earlier contact had taken place may have included the Irish Sea zone, bearing in mind that several late and rather debateable 'sagas' link Rollo with this region before his arrival at Rouen.[1]

Whatever the case, the chieftain Ragenold was certainly at least as powerful and important as Rollo, perhaps even more so, until his death on the banks of the Seine in *c*.925. Who knows what the subsequent history of 'Normandy' would have been if he had not died at this moment?

[1] For a good introduction to which see L. Irlenbusch-Reynard, *Rollon: de l'histoire à la fiction.*

Chapter 13

AFTER RAGENOLD'S DEATH: THE ACTIVITIES OF HIS SUCCESSORS UNTIL THEIR EXPULSION FROM BRITTANY IN 939

After Ragenold's death in *c*.925 for the rest of the decade and throughout the 930s the Rouen-based Northmen were totally absorbed with trying to extend their territory to the east and north of the Seine, towards Picardy.[1] This preoccupation is yet another indication that the grant of Le Mans and Bayeux in 924 was already a dead letter. Rollo had likely never even occupied Le Mans, but even if he had done, even if only briefly, the county was very soon back in Frankish hands. The same is true with Bayeux. The men of Bayeux had immediately attacked Rollo's territory after the 924 concession and there is no certain evidence that the Northmen ever gained any control of, or even influence over, the region until the early 940s, and these Northmen were unlikely from Rouen.[2]

But what was happening in the west of France in the years after Ragenold's death? This chapter examines the matter all the way through to the expulsion of the Northmen from Brittany in 939.

An unsuccessful attempt to remove the Northmen in 927

In the west of France, we next hear of Northmen on the Loire in 927. According to Flodoard: 'Hugh [the Great], the son of Robert, and Count Herbert [of Vermandois] proceeded against the Northmen who were staying on the Loire', and then, obviously slightly later: 'The Northmen of the Loire were besieged for five weeks by Herbert and Hugh. After hostages were offered

[1] For good overviews of these years see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 154-62; J.-F. Nieus, 'Montreuil et l'expansion du comté de Flandre au Xe siècle', in S. Lebecq, B. Bethouart, and L. Verslype (eds.), *Quentovic. Environnement, Archéologie, Histoire : actes du colloque international de Montreuil-sur-Mer, Étaples et Le Touquet et de la journée d'études de Lille sur les origines de Montreuil-sur-Mer (11-13 mai 2006 et 1er décembre 2006)* (Lille, 2010), pp. 493-505, at pp. 493-96.

[2] Dudo cites a bishop of Bayeux called Heiric, but it is possible he in fact resided in Upper Normandy (cf. Dudo: trans. Christiansen, pp. 68-69, 95); however, it was he, Dudo says, who supposedly baptised Richard I; William Longsword had apparently asked that his son Richard be educated in Bayeux in order to learn the Norse language which was no longer spoken in Rouen (cf. Dudo: trans. Christiansen, p. 197). Some coins were also minted at Bayeux sometime in the period 920-940 but we cannot determine which authority issued them. I thank Pierre Bauduin for these points.

and accepted, and the *pagus* of Nantes was conceded to them, the Northmen agreed to a peace with the Franks.'[1]

Who were these Northmen staying on the Loire? As best we can tell Ragenold was by now already dead, possibly expiring on the Seine, maybe near Rouen, in *c*.925, and if Richer of Reims is to be believed the survivors of his army had fled from the Seine to reassemble at Eu in Francia. Of course, this might not have been the case and some or all of Ragenold's remaining army might have retreated back to their former base on the Loire - doubtless now with a new leader whether or not this was already the chieftain called Incon who we first hear of in 931. This is what is implicitly assumed by the few historians whom have ever studied and written about these events. Another alternative is that a major group of Northmen had remained on the Loire and/or in southern Brittany when Ragenold had left the area for Francia in 923. The exodus of Breton clerics (with the relics of their saints) had been going on throughout in the first half of the 920s which does rather suggest that there were still Northmen operating in, or at least threatening, Brittany during these early years of the decade. Once Ragenold had lost his grip on the lower Loire after he had gone to the North in 923,[2] it is quite conceivable that it was Northmen who had remained on the Loire who were now besieged by Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois.[3]

At the end of 926 or in early 927 Herbert of Vermandois came into conflict with King Rodulf over Herbert's demand that the county of Laon be given to his son Odo following the death of its count Roger.[4] But Rodulf gave the county to Roger's son, also called Roger, instead.[5] Hugh

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, pp. 37-38; *Annals*, p. 16. It is quite possible that it was during this siege that Fulk the Red's eldest son Ingelger was killed by the Northmen; see K. F. Werner, 'Untersuchungen' (1958), p. 271 and n. 68, and the references therein; W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 60, n. 1.

[2] H. Guillotel suggested that Ragenold's 'démonstration militaire' in 923 in Francia 'se solda par les lourds revers et la conséquence immédiate de cette incursion au nord de la Seine, fut de lui faire perdre le contrôle effectif de la région de la Basse-Loire', for which see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 378. He thinks that the fact that Ragenold had not received any possessions in Gaul and that he had ravaged Hugh's lands between the Loire and the Seine before going to Burgundy in late 924 'proves' this point.

[3] Of course, perhaps a completely new Scandinavian fleet had arrived on the Loire in or a little before 927. This is not at all inconceivable, but if this had been so we might imagine we would have heard of it from Flodoard. And, in any case, where conceivably could these 'new' Northmen have come from? York after its Scandinavian king Sigtryggr Cáech died in 927 and King Æthelstan's annexed Northumbria (cf. *ASC s.a.* 927)? This is not out of the question. Or even maybe from the Seine? It is noticeable that from the spring of 926, when the Seine Northmen were again paid a tribute by King Rodulf (cf. Flodoard, *s.a.* 926) until the end of 927, when we hear of an important meeting involving a young William Longsword, again at Eu (cf. Flodoard, *s.a.* 927), we hear nothing of the Seine-based Northmen. All these speculative thoughts are, however, unlikely, though certainly not impossible. If we reject them then we either must presume that the Northmen on the Loire in 927 were those who had been left behind in Brittany or on the Loire when Ragenold moved north in 923, or we must assume, as is conventionally done, but always implicitly, that they were Ragenold's Northmen returned from the upper Seine but now under new (and unnamed) leadership - perhaps Incon's.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, p. 37; *Annals*, p. 16.

[5] *Ibid*., Flodoard.

the Great, Herbert's ally, seems not to have completely openly sided with Herbert but the two of them did go to meet the German king Henry the Fowler, an act rightly characterised by Lauer as 'peu amical vis-à-vis de Raoul [Rodulf]',[1] and that this 'démarche des deux plus puissants vassaux de la France septentrionale auprès de l'ennemi [Henry] de leur suzerain [Rodulf] était, au moins au point de vue féodal, un acte de félonie caractérisée.'[2] Whatever the extent of Hugh's now hostility towards Rodulf, it was he and Herbert who decided in 927 to proceed 'against the Northmen who were staying on the Loire' (*Nordmanni de Ligeri*).[3] Philippe Lauer explains this move as follows: 'Au retour de cette visite inconvenante [with Henry the Fowler], qui décèle l'extraordinaire besoin d'intrigue de son esprit inquiet, Herbert sentit qu'il avait besoin de relever son prestige. La lutte contre les Normands était le plus sûr moyen de gagner un peu de popularité. Comme Raoul venait de traiter avec les Normands de la Seine, Herbert et Hugues firent une expédition contre ceux de la Loire'.[4] This might well have been the motive for Herbert whose main interests lay to the north of the Seine. That it was the case for Hugh the Great is less convincing. Hugh was always his own man and looked after his own interests first. In 921 his father Robert had been humiliated by his unsuccessful attempt to remove Ragenold's Loire-based Northmen. In 924 he had been pressured into granting his own territories in the Bessin and in Le Mans to the Northmen (of the Seine), but he had the very next year moved in force to try to prevent their possible expansion into these (his) regions. He had also in 924 suffered Ragenold's incursions into his Neustrian realm and seemingly paid him off to go elsewhere. In 925 he had arrived on the upper Seine to try to help to defeat Ragenold's Northmen recently arrived there, although Ragenold had escaped. Finally, in 926, Hugh had married the English king Æthelstan's half-sister Eadhild with a view, it is very clear, to strengthen his position at home. And then suddenly Hugh moved against some Northmen on the Loire in 927, an area which had long been part of his 'Robertian' patrimony. I would suggest that all this was quite sufficient motivation and incentive for Hugh to make a fresh attempt to remove the Northmen from his territory.

Whatever the motives, Herbert and Hugh's army did besiege some Loire-based Northmen for five weeks without success, until, eventually, hostages were offered and exchanged and the Loire Northmen were conceded the *pagus* of Nantes as part of an agreed peace.[5] The fact that this concession of the county of Nantes repeats the earlier one made in 921 by Hugh's father

[1] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 47.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, p. 38; *Annals*, p. 16.
[4] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, pp. 47-48.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, p. 38; *Annals*, p. 16.

Robert might seem to suggest that the earlier grant had remained a dead letter and had had no practical consequence on the ground. On the other hand, as J.-F. Lemarignier has shown,[1] in the tenth century land concessions such as these establishing a 'peace', whether between kings and the territorial princes or between these princes and their subjects, were not made with any hereditary rights of succession and often had to be renewed by successors (whether hereditary or not), and the Northmen on the Loire in 927 were clearly now under different leadership.

The fact that the concession of 927 did not extend to Brittany, as nominally had the one in 921, might suggest that Hugh had given up his father's pretensions there, but it was perhaps just a recognition that coastal Brittany at least had already become infested with Scandinavian bases, and possibly some tentative 'settlement', all accomplished in the absence of the native Breton elite who were in England and elsewhere. It is also possible that the Northmen of Nantes/the lower Loire and the Northmen established along the Breton coasts were separate groups. As will be discussed later, in 931 we hear that the *dux* of the Northmen in Brittany (possibly just in Cornouaille) was called *Felecan* and the leader of the Northmen 'staying on the Loire' was called *Incon*. If these two chieftains were already the leaders of their respective forces in 927, which is possible but ultimately unproveable, then it might be that Incon was already the leader of the Northmen who Hugh and Herbert besieged in 927.[2]

In regard to the result of the siege in 927, Hubert Guillotel says, 'A l'inverse de ce qui s'était produit en 921, cette expédition n'a pas été vaine puisque les Normands de la Loire n'ont reçu que le pays de Nantes. Le reste du royaume breton leur échappait, ce qui autorisait certains retours, ou tout au moins donnait corps à ce désir'.[3] Of course Guillotel's emphasis is quite rightly on Brittany proper (the Armorican peninsula), less so on Nantes and 'New Brittany' and even less so on the Northmen.

From the Northmen's point of view, they had once again seen off the Franks as they had in 921 and they were given free rein on the lower Loire. One interesting question is why we never hear again of any Northmen on the Loire or in Aquitaine until 930, three years later. Had they used these years to tighten their grip on the Nantais (meaning mostly Nantes itself and the immediate surrounding area both north and south of the Loire), or even in Brittany where some

[1] J.-F. Lemarignier, *Recherches sur l'hommage en marche et les frontières féodales* (Lille, 1945); *idem*, *La France médiévale: institutions et société* (Paris, 2000), p. 158.

[2] Above we noted the possibility that the Northmen with whom the Franks fought and treated in 927 had arrived recently, possibly sometime after Ragenold left for the North in 923. Although I tend (at least for the moment) to reject this idea, if it had been the case then as P. Bauduin says (pers. comm.) 'on comprendrait mieux que l'accord de 921 ne soit pas réitéré'.

[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 391. In terms of these 'certains retours'; Guillotel then gives some examples of the returns to Brittany in the years following.

Northmen had certainly established a base or more likely bases? I think this is the best interpretation we have because in 930 Flodoard tells us that: 'In the year 930 the Northmen of the Loire were attacking Aquitaine with plundering expeditions.'[1] It is to these plundering expeditions we now must turn.

Defeat in the Limousin in 930

After the Loire-based Northmen had once again seen off the Robertian Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois in 927 they were left alone by the Franks for the next three years. Perhaps they used the time to establish their positions both on the Loire and along the Breton coasts, no doubt also trying to extract tribute from various local communities. It is possible that they were using Nantes as a trading base and maybe even trading in slaves. During this three-year lull the complex dynastic struggles between King Rodulf, Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois continued. Herbert had been in rebellion since the beginning of 927 as we have seen. At the end of 927, after Herbert and Hugh's failed siege on the Loire, Herbert released Charles the Simple from his incarceration for a while and took him to meet Rollo's young son William (Longsword) at the Northmen's fort at Eu where William 'committed himself to Charles and affirmed his friendship with Herbert'.[2] I will not detail or analyse all these events here.[3]

Whatever the Loire Northmen had been doing in the three years after the five-week siege in 927 the *pactus* does not seem to have contented them enough to desist from further raiding.[4]

Still seemingly holding to their agreement with the northern Franks (Hugh and Herbert), who were still distracted by their own fights, in his first entry for the year 930 Flodoard reports: 'In this year 930, the Northmen of the Loire were attacking Aquitaine with plundering expeditions, but king Rodulf almost annihilated them in a single battle in the *pagus* of Limoges', after which 'the king made the Aquitanians submit to him'.[5] Where exactly the Northmen were plundering in Aquitaine is not said. Given that they started on the lower Loire and ended up in the Limousin would suggest that they may have revisited their old stomping grounds in the Aunis and the Saintonge on their way to the Limousin.[6] Perhaps there is one obscure piece of

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 930: *Annales*, p. 45; *Annals*, p. 19.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, pp. 39-40: *Annals*, p. 17.
[3] Cf. P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 156; J.-F. Nieus, 'Montreuil et l'expansion du comté de Flandre', pp. 494-95; F. McNair, 'After Soissons', pp. 15-17.
[4] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 376.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 930: *Annales*, p. 45; *Annals*, p. 19.
[6] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59, says that when the Northmen again invaded Aquitaine in 930 they 'pillèrent la Saintonge, l'Angoumois, le Périgord, et pénétrèrent jusqu'en Limousin'. He then (*ibid.*, p. 59, n. 1) rather strangely references chapters 33 and 34 of Adrevald's first book of *Miracles of Saint Benedict* for this. This is

evidence for these pillages. In a charter of the monastery of Saint-Cyprien in Poitiers, dated to 946-947, Alboin, the bishop of Poitiers and abbot of Charroux, granted some vacant lands close to Niort (dep. Deux-Sèvres, near the coast in the Aunis) to the monks of Saint-Cyprien at Poitiers. This charter reads: 'Alboinus espiscopus et abbas Karrofensis concesserunt monachis Sancti Cipriani in villa que dicitur Ad Fontem, media leuga a castro Niorto distante, quartas II et IIII jugera pratem et media, opera de terra vacante juxta Niorto. Hec fecerunt propter infestationem Normannorem […]'.[1] When this is commented on at all it is usually said that there must have been Northmen raiding in the area of Niort in 946-47. For example Marcel Garaud says: 'Il est question de leurs irruptions dans le voisinage de Niort vers le milieu du Xe siècle',[2] André Debord just mentions the charter,[3] whilst Emmanuel Barbier says: 'Certaines troupes sont présentes dans la région de Niort vers le milieu du Xe siècle.'[4] But it is not at all clear that these grants of vacant lands near Niort were made because there was an infestation of Northmen in the area at this time (i.e. in the mid-940s). The wording of the charter can equally well be read as meaning that the lands were vacant because the area had been the object of earlier attacks by Northmen and that at that time the people had fled, or even been killed or carted away as slaves. The Niort area could thus certainly have been one of the places pillaged by the Northmen in 930. It was a logical place for Northmen coming by ship from the lower Loire to first make landfall, as they had as early as 852, and from where they could make raids further inland; in fact a Roman road directly connected Niort with Limoges. Additionally, if there had been Northmen pillaging in the Niort area in 946-47 what conceivable use would these vacant lands in such an exposed coastal area (supposedly already infested with Northmen) have been to the community of Saint-Cyprien at Poitiers? It makes little sense. Similarly, perhaps the grant of these vacant lands by the bishop of Poitiers to the monks of Saint-Cyprien was just compensation for damage and loss the community of monks had suffered elsewhere during an earlier *chevauchée*. Once again, and if so, this can only have been in 930.[5] However, if there really was a band of Northmen in the Aunis in the mid-940s it would be of extreme interest to know where they had come from. Might they have been a remnant of the Northmen

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clearly a rare mistake because Adrevald wrote his *Miracles* in the 860s-870s and these chapters refer to attacks before that.

[1] *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Cyprien de Poitiers*, ed. L.-F.-X. Redet, *Archives historiques du Poitou,* vol. 3 (Poitiers, 1874), pp. 326-27.

[2] M. Garaud, 'Les invasions des Normands en Poitou', p. 260.

[3] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 53.

[4] E. Barbier, 'Maillezais, du palais ducal au réduit bastionné', p. 202.

[5] There were many charters issued in the greater Poitou area both before and after 946, business seems to have been going on as usual, and there is no mention in any of these charters, or anywhere else, of any pillaging or presence of Northmen in the whole area in the mid-tenth century.

who had been expelled from Nantes by Alan Barbe-Torte in *c*.936, or even a group that had retired from Brittany after the defeat at the battle of Trans in northern Brittany in 939?[1] We simply have no way to know, and the report in this charter most likely concerns lands near Niort that had been left vacant since the raids of 930 or perhaps earlier.

To return to the year 930 and the battle won by King Rodulf in the Limousin, it is highly likely as many historians have suggested[2] that this stunning victory is that later reported by Ademar of Chabannes, which he likely took from the *Miracles of Saint Genulf*, as that being won by 'Rodulf king of Burgundy' at a place called *Ad Destricios*.[3] This story of Ademar became legendary. As Philippe Lauer once wrote: 'C'est à elle qu'on rattache les exploits du comte d'Angoulême Guillaume Taillefer',[4] a story itself which was later much embellished in the legendary *Chroniques saintongeaises*. Finally, Aimoin of Fleury makes direct allusions to Rodulf's victory in the Limousin in 930 when he praises him for his triumph over the Northmen and bringing peace back to Aquitaine.[5]

The battles *ad Destricios* in the Limousin and Montpensier in the Auvergne

As has been mentioned briefly above it has often been maintained that Flodoard's account of King Rodulf's defeat of the Northmen in 930 in the Limousin (as also later embellished by Richer of Reims)[6] can most probably be linked with one of Ademar of Chabannes's stories, which reads in the 'A' text:[7]

> Que tempore Rodulfus[8] rex Burgundie, cum hoste fortissimo Lemovicium appulit, et congregati sunt cum innumerabiles Normannorum, et commissio prelio in loco qui dicitur Ad Destricios, usque ad internitionem devastati sunt pagani et exinde fugientos, non ultra

[1] Both of these events are examined later.
[2] For example W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 378-79, n. 4; P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59.
[3] See for example *Adémar de Chabannes*, *Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 220. For a discussion of this matter see the following section.
[4] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59. Lauer took this idea from Woldemar Lippert, *König Rudolf*, p. 71. This Guillaume 'Taillefer' is discussed more in Chapter 15.
[5] Aimoin of Fleury, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, book 2, chap. 3, p. 100; chap. 5, pp. 103-4; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 206-7. Cf. also P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59 and n. 3.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 930: *Annales*, p. 45; *Annals*, p. 19. Richer of Reims, *Histories*: ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 56, pp. 136-37, book 1, chap. 57, pp. 136-38.
[7] This linking was first proposed by François Marvaud, Karl von Kalckstein, Woldemar Lippert and Walther Vogel, and taken up later, amongst others, by Philippe Lauer, André Debord and Hubert Guillotel. The relevant references for all this are given later.
[8] *Radulfus* in MSS C and H.

fiduciuam presumpserunt veniendi in Aquitaniam. Rodulfus autem gratias Deo, pro cujus amore animam suam poseruent, referens, cum magno triumpho regressus est.[1]

A cette époque Raoul, roi de Bourgogne, gagna le Limousin avec une très puissant armée […].[2] D'innombrables troupes de Normands se rassemblèrent contre lui : le combat s'engagea au lieu dit *Ad Destricios*, jusqu'à l'écrasement complet des païens. Ceux qui purent s'en tirer par la fuite n'eurent plus désormais la présomption de venir en Aquitaine. Raoul cependant, rendant grâces à Dieu pour l'amour duquel il avait risqué sa vie, rentra chez lui triomphalement.[3]

To me at least the meaning seems abundantly clear: 'King Rodulf of Burgundy' means King Rodulf of Francia (r. 923-936), who was indeed a Burgundian and the son of Richard the Justiciar duke of Burgundy (*c*. 858-921), and who had become king of West Francia in 923 following the battle at Soissons.

The battle *ad Destricios* certainly thus seems to mean that won by King Rodulf in 930 in the Limousin as described by Flodoard, after which Rodulf did return to Francia and then Burgundy as Flodoard also says. Also, it is true that Aquitaine was not bothered by the Northmen again, or at least not for a long time.[4] Philippe Lauer sums up: 'Les Normands de la Loire étaient demeurés dans un calme relatif depuis 925. Au commencement de l'année 930, ils envahirent de nouveau l'Aquitaine, pillèrent la Saintonge, l'Angoumois, le Périgord, et pénétrèrent jusqu'en Limousin. Raoul se porta au secours de sujets qui lui étaient fidèles depuis le début de son règne. Il atteignit les pillards au lieu dit *Ad Destricios* et les anéantit presque totalement.'[5]

The connection between Ademar's story of 'King' Rodulf's victory over the Northmen in the Limousin and a passage in the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* has sometimes been remarked upon.[6] These *Miracles* were written at the monastery of Estrée (today Saint-Genou, dep. Indre in Berry) in around the year 1000.[7] They say in chapter 19:

Itaque cum per septem annorum lustra Neustriam et Aquitaniam devastando Arvernum usque pervennissent Normanni; *rex Burgundiae Radulf*, in auxiliam evocatus ab

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes, Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 139.
[2] I will come to a small addition made in the 'C' manuscript shortly.
[3] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 220.
[4] There was a small raid in 935 which will be discussed later.
[5] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59, and see n. 2.
[6] See for instance W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 378-79, n. 4, p. 395, n. 1; J. Lair, *Le siège de Chartres par les Normands (911)*, pp. 28-29; *idem*, *Études critiques*, p. 126, n. 1; as well as by more recent scholars as referenced later.
[7] See G. Oury, 'Les documents hagiographiques et l'histoire des monastères dépourvus d'archives : le cas de Saint-Genou de l'Estrée', *Revue Mabillon*, 59 (1978), pp. 289-316.

Aquitanis, *cum exercitu valido festinus occurrit eis. Commissoque praelio cum eis in loco dicitur Ad Destrictios, Deo auxiliante christianis, pene usque internecionem delete sunt pagani et ab Aquitania fuguti*.[1]

The connection between this passage and Ademar's *Chronicle* is quite clear. The words in italics above were highlighted by the *Miracles*' editor Oswald Holder-Egger because of their relation to Ademar's *Chronicle*. For a long time, and following Holder-Egger's lead,[2] it was assumed that the many passages in these *Miracles* which are more or less the same as those found in Ademar's *Chronicle* (*verbatim* on occasion) were borrowings from Ademar. Subsequently, however, scholars such as Richard Landes, Pascale Bourgain and Georges Pon have convincingly argued that it was Ademar who borrowed various fragments concerning the history of France from the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* and not the other way round.[3] I tend to agree with this.

One most interesting feature of the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* is that they say the Northmen had devastated Aquitaine and the Auvergne for 'seven years' *before* they met King Rodulf 'of Burgundy' *ad Destrictios* where the king won a great victory. But, indeed, this devastation of Aquitaine and the Auvergne was described by Flodoard of Reims in 923 and seven years after this means precisely 930. Furthermore as Jules Lair noted: 'Un passage de la *Translatio sancti Genulfi* mentionne l'expédition en Auvergne et la fait suivre de la concession aux Normands d'un territoire sur les bords de l'Océan.'[4] Now Lair was trying here to fit all this into the years 910-912 regarding Rollo's establishment in Neustria although he gets into some difficulty because he admits that the same passage also refers to the battle *ad Destricios* at the same time, but he says without any justification that this battle *ad Destricios* took place in 898,[5] which as Walther Vogel quite rightly said was 'vermutlich weil die Seine-Normannen damals Aquitaine plünderten',[6] that is 'probably because the Seine Northmen were plundering Aquitaine at the time', which they certainly were. But when we read the text mentioned by Jules Lair which immediately follows the story of Rodulf, the Northmen and *Ad Destricios* etc., it seems to relate

[1] *Miracles of Saint Genulf*, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 2, pp. 1204-13, chap. 19, at p. 1212.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 1204.
[3] R. A. Landes, *Relics*, *Apocalypse, and the Deceits of History: Ademar of Chabannes, 989–1034* (Cambridge, Mass, 1995), pp. 132-33; P. Bourgain with R. Landes and G. Pon, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, 'Introduction', pp. LXV-LXVIII; Y. Chauvin and G. Pon (eds.), *Ademar de Chabannes. Chronique*, p. 24 and n. 92. Although Georges Pon (*ibid*.) adds the usual cautionary thought that perhaps the *Miracles* and Ademar had a common lost source.
[4] J. Lair, *Le siège de Chartres par les Normands*, p. 28, and for the text see n. 5 at p. 29, as well as *Miracles of Saint Genulf*, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 15. 2, p. 1212.
[5] *Ibid*., p. 29.
[6] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 378, n. 4.

more to the concessions made to the Northmen in the 920s in both the north and on the Loire regarding Brittany (for which see the previous chapter). The *Miracles of Saint Genulf* then go on to talk about the Hungarian invasion (into Aquitaine, Burgundy and Berry), which we can place in 937, and as is also found related in Flodoard's *Annals*.[1]

So far so, reasonably, clear. However, the 'C' manuscript of Ademar's *Chronicle* adds after 'Rodulfus rex Burgundie, cum hoste fortissimo Lemovicium appulit' the words 'rogati(s) (or *rogatu*) Odonis regis; nam ipse Francia tutabat',[2] 'à la demande du Roi Eudes; en effet lui-même se chargeait de défendre la France',[3] which suggests that Rodulf had come at the request of King Odo and that Odo had charged Rodulf with defending Francia.

This has subsequently led to all sorts of debate and confusion because we know that King Odo died in 898, and although he fought the Northmen on several occasions, he had never had any real claim to Aquitaine and he certainly never confronted the Northmen there (to which matter we shall come soon), although he did go to Aquitaine over the winter of 892-893 to try to exercise some authority. Pascale Bourgain suggests that, 'Il est probable qu'Adémar a attribué à Raoul ou Rodolphe, roi de Bourgogne transjurane, une attaque menée par Eudes lui-même. Le roi a voulu contourner par l'Est la principauté aquitaine de Guillaume le Pieux. Après avoir obtenu l'appui de Richard, comte d'Autun-Mâcon, il a pénétré en Auvergne par le sud-est - ce qui pourrait expliquer la confusion d'Adémar'. Here she is referencing Richer of Reims's *Histories* (book 1, chaps 7-9) which Bourgain says 'situe la bataille au nord de Clermont, à Montpensier, et mentionne lui aussi la présence de Normands dans les troupes du duc d'Aquitaine', referencing here Lauranson-Rosaz's *L'Auvergne et ses marges*.[4] This idea is repeated later in an abbreviated form by Chauvin and Pon: 'Il est probable qu'Ademar a attributé à Raoul [ou Rodolphe], roi de Bourgogne transjurane (912-937), une attaque menée par Eudes lui-même. La bataille avec les Normands eut lieu au Nord de Clermont à Montpensier.'[5]

Before coming to Richer's stories of Catillus's supposed defeat by King Odo at Montpensier in the Auvergne, a few more words need to be said of this 'Raoul ou Rodolphe, roi de

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 937: *Annales*, pp. 65-68; *Annals*, pp. 29-30. For which see P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV d'Outre-Mer* (Paris, 1900), pp. 20-27 and notes; *idem*, *Robert Ier et Raoul de Bourgogne*, pp. 75-76 and notes, where other references to these raids are given.

[2] *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, book 3, chap. 20, p. 140; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 126-27. Jules Chavanon (*Adémar de Chabannes, Chronique*, p. 139, n. 1) says: 'On sait que jamais Eudes ou Odon, comte de France, n'eut l'Aquitaine, tout ce qu'ajoute le ms. C […] est de pure fantaisie.'

[3] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 20, p. 220.

[4] P. Bourgain, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, note on III, 20, 18-24, pp. 266-267. Christian Lauranson-Rosaz's views on these matters will be touched upon later.

[5] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 220, n. 187.

Bourgogne transjurane'. The first point is that there were two of them, a father and a son. The first, Rodulf I (*c*.859- 911), was the son of the Welf Conrad II of Burgundy. The second was his son, Rodulf II, born between 885 and 895 and who died in 937.[1] If King Odo ever called in the help of a Rodulf, king of Burgundy *transjurane*, then it must have been the first of these, although why Chauvin and Pon (see the quote above) refer to the second Rodulf is a mystery to me. In any case it is quite apparent from the historical record that neither of these two Rodulfs was ever in the Limousin or in the Auvergne and they were most certainly never involved in any battle against the Northmen in either place.

Why then are such Rodulfs continually brought into the equation? After all, if the 'C' manuscript of Ademar had not added a mention of King Odo then I doubt if any historian would really have had to think of Ademar's *Rodulfus rex Burgundie* and the *Miracles of Saint Genulf's rex Burgundiae Radulf* meaning anything other than the 'Burgundian' King Rodulf of Francia (d. 936). This confusion goes back at least to François Marvaud in 1873; in his *Histoire des vicomtes et de la vicomté de Limoges* he wrote:

> Cependant quelques parties de l'Aquitaine étaient encore ravagées par les Normands ; Limoges tremblait de les voir reparaître sous ses murs, lorsqu'un nouveau défenseur lui vint des bords du Rhône. Rodolphe, roi de Bourgogne, appelé par Eudes, qui seul ne pouvait délivrer le pays, arriva dans le Limousin avec une armée à laquelle se joignit le vicomte Foucher. A cette nouvelle, les Normands dispersés se réunirent sur les bords de la Dordogne, pour remonter vers le Nord. Rodolphe et les siens leur livrèrent une sanglante bataille à Estresse, près de Beaulieu, et les taillèrent en pièces (930). Une nouvelle défaite dans les environs de Bourganeuf rendit la paix au pays.[2]

Although Marvaud does identify this battle (*Ad Destricios*) as taking place in 930 he also accepts rather too blithely that a 'Rodolphe, roi de Bourgogne' from the Rhône had been called upon by King Odo. I presume Marvaud must have meant the first 'Rodolphe' (who died in 911) because Odo died in 898, but he places the battle in 930 which is completely contradictory to any involvement of Odo. In addition, it is his identification of *Ad Destricios* with Estresse on the Dordogne (near to Beaulieu, dep. Corrèze) that has generally been accepted since even although Estresse is not in the Limousin and there is no support I know of for a second defeat

[1] Note that via his mother King Rodulf of Francia was the nephew of Rodulf I of Burgundy and thereby the cousin of Rodulf II; see for instance P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 2 and n. 5.
[2] F. Marvaud, *Histoire des vicomtes et de la vicomté de Limoges*, vol. 1 (Dumoulin, 1873), pp. 67-68.

at Bourganeuf (dep. Creuse) to the northeast of Limoges. Marvaud must have got this idea of Bourganeuf from Georg-Bernhard Depping's *Histoire des expéditions maritimes des Normands* who placed King Rodulf's victory at Bourganeuf, but indeed in 931![1]

This whole confusion led various German historians to try to sort it out. First, in 1877 Karl von Kalckstein wrote: 'Überdies erfocht Rudolf ad Destricios in Limousin einen glänzenden Sieg über die Loirenormannen, der seine allgemeine Anerkennung beschleunigte',[2] 'Moreover Rodulf fought and won a glittering victory over the Loire Northmen ad Destricios in the Limousin that accelerated his general recognition', and: 'Endlich berichtet Ademar noch, König Rudolf von Burgund habe ein starkes Hülfsheer zur Unterstützung Odos gegen die Normannen nach Limoges geführt, und sie bei *ad Destricios* so geschlagen, daß sie nicht wieder nach Aquitanien zu kommen wagten. Diese Bemerkung macht eine Verwechslung mit dem späteren burgundischen Herzog und Westfrankenkönig Rudolf (Fl. 930) wahrscheinlich', 'Finally Ademar reports even that King Rodulf of Burgundy had brought a strong army of help to Limoges to support Odo against the Northmen, and so badly defeated them ad Destricios that they never again dared come to Aquitaine. This remark makes a conflation between the later Burgundian Duke and the West Frankish king Rudolf (Fl. 930) probable'.[3]

Then in 1886 Woldemar Lippert clearly stated that the battle reported by Flodoard in 930 was the same as that mentioned by Ademar as taking place 'ad Destricios', and he quite rightly adds that this victory over the Loire Northmen who had previously harmed the monastery at Fleury is linked with Aimoin of Fleury's praise of King Rodulf.[4] Then in a footnote[5] he refers to Ademar (actually only in MS 'C) bringing together King Odo and his 'Bundesgenosse' 'Rudolf von Burgund', but says, again rightly, that the battle of *ad Destricios* is clearly linked with 'Rudolf von Frankreich', and that both of these 'Rudolfs' were already often changed or conflated in the Middle Ages, and that here the confusion (*Verwirrung*) is heightened by the conflation (*Verwechslung*) not of the contemporary Rudolf II but with his father of the same name, which is all quite correct. Then referring to all this confusion and conflation Lippert ends by referring to Marvaud, who he says, in an understated but nonetheless withering way, brings all this to a head; Rodulf of Burgundy was called in to help Odo, but the battle took place in 930; one could even add an exclamation mark here!

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[1] G.-B. Depping, *Histoire des expéditions maritimes des Normands et de leur établissement en France au dixième siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1826), p. 143.
[2] C. (*sic*) von Kalckstein, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, *der Kampf der Robertiner und Karolinger*, p. 180.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 476, my translations.
[4] W. Lippert, *König Rudolf*, pp. 70-71
[5] *Ibid*., p. 71, n. 1; referencing Kalckstein, *ibid*., p. 180.

Explicitly following von Kalckstein and Lippert, Walther Vogel says: 'Ademar von Chabannes […] erzählt von einer Schlacht ad Destricios im Limousin […], worin König Rudolf von Burgund die Normannen bis zur Vernichtung schlug, und zwar während König Odos Regierung [...]. Ich glaube [...] daß Ademar den König Rudolf v. Frankreich (923-936), Sohn Richard v. Burgund, mit König Rudolf v. Hochburgund verwechselt und daß es sich um einen Kampf gegen die späteren Loire-Normannen *ca.* 930 handelt',[1] 'Ademar of Chabannes […] tells of a battle ad Destricios in the Limousin […] in which King Rodulf of Burgundy completely defeated the Northmen, indeed during the reign of King Odo […]. I believe […] that Ademar conflated King Rodulf of Francia (923-936), son of Richard of Burgundy, with King Rodulf of High-Burgundy, and that it all concerned a fight/battle against the later Loire Northmen in about 930.'[2]

It is to all these German historians' great credit that they seemed to have got rid of all this confusion and conflation. Finally, and certainly following them, in 1910 Philippe Lauer wrote that 'Les Normands de la Loire étaient demeurés dans un calme relatif depuis 925. Au commencement de l'année 930, ils envahirent de nouveau l'Aquitaine, pillèrent la Saintonge, l'Angoumois, le Périgord,[3] et pénétrèrent jusqu'en Limousin. Raoul se porta au secours de sujets qui lui étaient fidèles depuis le début de son règne. Il atteignit les pillards au lieu dit *Ad Destricios* et les anéantit presque totalement'.[4] Lauer is followed in this by André Debord,[5] and by Hubert Guillotel who first refers to Flodoard's *Annals* by quoting, or perhaps badly translating, them: '« L'an 930, le roi Raoul anéantit presqu'entièrement en un combat dans le Limousin, les Normands de la Loire, qui par leurs pillages ravageaient l'Aquitaine, et il se soumit les Aquitaines »', he then adds the comment, 'Selon l'histoire d'Adémar de Chabannes et des annales provenant de l'abbaye de Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire,[6] Raoul aurait livré combat en un lieu appelé *Ad Destricios* ou *Ad Districta*, ordinairement identifié avec Estresse sur la Dordogne,[7] à une trentaine de kilomètres au sud de Brive'.[8]

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[1] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, pp. 378-79, n. 4.
[2] My translation.
[3] P. Lauer (*ibid*., p. 59, n. 1) then rather strangely references chapters 33 and 34 of Adrevald's first book of *Miracles of Saint Benedict* for this. This is clearly a rare mistake from him because Adrevald wrote his *Miracles* in the 860s-870s and these chapters refer to attacks before that. I guess he must have intended Aimoin's second book.
[4] P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59, and see n. 2.
[5] A. Debord, *La société laïque*, p. 53.
[6] By which I presume he means specifically Aimoin of Fleury's second book of the *Miracles of Saint Bendedict*.
[7] Without referencing it he means Marvaud's opinion.
[8] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 392. Guillotel then goes on to say: 'A l'annonce de cette nouvelle, les clercs dolois ont très bien pu se mettre en route vers la Bretagne en empruntant, non la voie directe qui leur faisait côtoyer la principauté normande de Rouen, mais celle du sud et c'est lors d'une étape vers Orléans qu'ils purent être informés du maintien de forts partis scandinaves aussi bien à Nantes, que dans le reste de la Bretagne, ce qui les aurait décidés à se fixer un temps à Orléans […].' Although there are a couple of

So, and in summary, Ademar's battle at a place called *Ad Destricios* was probably taken from the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* and in a vague and indirect way is more than likely referring to King Rodulf's victory in 930 as told of by Flodoard.

We might leave the question here, but unfortunately as has already been noted scholars of Ademar of Chabannes such as Bourgain, Pon and Chauvin bring the whole confusion back and make it even worse by mixing in Richer of Reims' late tenth-century *Histories* which tell a long and fabulous story about how Rollo's father *Catillus* came into Aquitaine and the Auvergne, was defeated by King Odo at Montpensier, was brought to Odo at Limoges and baptised by the king there and then killed on the sacred font of Saint-Martial by a standard bearer called Ingo - and so much more; the whole story covers fully six chapters.[1] To repeat a little, Bourgain says: 'Il est probable qu'Adémar a attribué à Raoul ou Rodolphe, roi de Bourgogne transjurane, une attaque menée par Eudes lui-même. Le roi a voulu contourner par l'Est la principauté aquitaine de Guillaume le Pieux. Après avoir obtenu l'appui de Richard, comte d'Autun-Mâcon, il a pénétré en Auvergne par le sud-est - ce qui pourrait expliquer la confusion d'Adémar', and that Richer of Reims 'situe la bataille au nord de Clermont, à Montpensier, et mentionne-lui aussi la présence de Normands dans les troupes du duc d'Aquitaine'[2]

This opens yet another can of worms. Leaving to one side the erroneous link made with the battle *ad Destricios* let us first ask if there is any possibility that King Odo fought or won a major battle against the Northmen in the Auvergne.

For reasons it would take us too far from our subject to pursue here, Odo did go to Aquitaine in the autumn of 892 and stayed until the first months of 893. This is all reported in the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* and in Abbo of Saint-Germain's *Bella Parisiacae urbis*.[3] According to Abbo the

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things in this passage I may disagree with, that Hubert Guillotel fully accepts Walther Vogel's and the other German historians' view that Ademar's *Ad Destricios* is referring to King Rodulf's battle in 930 is most enlightening.

[1] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chaps. 6-11, pp. 22-39; the story regarding Catillus and Odo and Montpensier is in chaps 6 and 7. É. Favre, *Eudes,* p. 232, regarded this whole episode of Richer as a fabrication, and for a discussion of its 'epic' nature see P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, Appendix II, 'Les sources légendaires de Richer', esp. pp. 267-68 and notes.

[2] P. Bourgain, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, note on III, 20, 18-24, pp. 266-67.

[3] Cf. *Annals of Saint-Vaast*: *AV* 892-893: ed. von Simson, pp. 72-74; trans. Coupland: (892): 'The Northmen returned from Louvain, but seeing the whole kingdom weakened by famine, they left Francia in the autumn and put to sea. And the Franks who had long been hostile to King Odo allied themselves with others, in order to be able to accomplish what they wanted. They urged the King to leave Francia and to go to Aquitaine for the winter, so that Francia, which had been afflicted for so many years, could to some extent recover; and because Ramnulf had died, and Ebulus and Gauzbert had deserted him, he should either win them back to himself, drive them out of his kingdom, or kill them. He had become trusting, and deferred to their advice, unaware of what terrible things they were planning against him. When he reached the borders of Aquitaine, Ebulus, knowing that he was coming, turned and fled, and was killed by a stone near a certain fortress; later his brother Gauzbert was also trapped, and ended his life soon after.' (893): 'The Franks who had remained in Francia gathered in Rheims to vent the hatred and hostility which they felt towards King Odo, and formed a plan against him. They would meet again in the same place on the day of the Purification of St Mary [2 February], and reveal by unmistakeably clear actions what they had affirmed together. So

only 'fight' which took place during this period was one where Odo had come into the Limousin/Auvergne region in about November 892 and had a standoff with William the Pious, which, however, did not come to a battle, but sometime after which Odo's vassal Hugh did fight William and died.[1] When we couple this with the fact that in 892 the Northmen left the North *before* Odo left for Aquitaine, as the *Annals of Saint-Vaast* clearly state,[2] then we must discard the idea that there was any battle between Odo and the Northmen in the Auvergne in either 892 or 893.[3]

But based on a belief in Richer of Reims' stories about Odo, Christian Lauranson-Rosaz maintains that there was a final expedition made by Odo against William the Pious in May to July 893.[4] During this expedition Odo arrived in the Auvergne where there took place 'la fameuse bataille de Montpensier, dont il ne faut pas remettre en cause l'authenticité historique'.[5] But according to Lauranson-Rosaz this battle was not fought by Odo against the Northmen but by Odo against the Aquitanians:

> Richer nous la relate, et bien sûr à son habitude il insiste volontairement sur l'aspect épique, faussant le nombre des combattants, mais surtout leur nature : comme les

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they sent word to Charles [the Simple], the son of King Louis [III], who was still only a young boy, and had him come to the said gathering. And having assembled on the aforesaid day in Rheims, they set him on his father's throne as the consecrated king, and all formed a sworn allegiance against King Odo. So the news sped swiftly on its way to inform King Odo what had happened. But he, as had then been agreed, remained in Aquitaine, and sent word to those who were loyal to him in Francia that they should be steadfast, asking them to remain faithful to him. After Easter Archbishop Fulco and Count Herbert, accompanied by King Charles and an entire army, intended to go against King Odo, but Richard, William, and Ademar opposed them, and they had a sizeable force. Nor did King Odo hesitate to come against them, sending a message to those who were with Charles that they should put right whatever they had done wrong through a pledge, and be mindful of the oaths of allegiance that they had sworn to him'; Abbo of Saint-Germain, *Le siege de Paris par les Normands*, ed. and trans. H. Waquet (Paris, 1942), v. 533-66, pp. 106-9, at p. 109, n. 6: 'Eudes séjourna durant l'automne et les premier mois d'hiver en Aquitaine, peut-être en Berry.' For slightly different presentations of Odo's stay, itinerary and all the events involved, compare Carl [*sic*] von Kalckstein, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, *der Kampf der Robertiner und Karolinger*, pp. 78-81; E. Favre, *Eudes,* pp. 146-49; L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 442-48; C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges (Velay, Gévaudan) du VIIe au XIe siècle: La fin du monde antique?* (Le Puy, 1987), pp. 37-40.

[1] For which see L. Auzias, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne*, pp. 445-46.

[2] See also *ibid*., p. 443, n. 84.

[3] Alban Gautier in his article 'Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs?', p. 31, after saying regarding the battle at Montpensier that 'if it indeed happened', says: 'Odo's victory in 892 at Montpensier was not against the vikings of the Seine and the Somme who had "come from England" thirteen years before, but against the vikings in the Loire basin, who had been conducting independent expeditions over the decades from bases near Nantes and Angers, and on the island of Noirmoutier [...].' See also his later French version of this article: *idem*, 'Nature et mode d'action des bandes armées vikings'. In this/these article(s) Gautier tries to explore whether King Odo had really fought some Northmen 'from the Loire' (as he says) in 892 at Montpensier in the Auvergne (as suggested and without any date in Richer of Reims). But in recent correspondence on this matter, he says: 'Concerning the Montpensier affair, you're probably right; there's no way the dates could work when you consider contemporary sources.' So, there was no victory of King Odo in 892 in the Auvergne.

[4] C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges*, pp. 39-40.

[5] *Ibid*.

Basques de Roncevaux déguisés en Sarrasins par la Geste, les Aquitains de Montpensier deviennent des pirates normands ; on cache la lutte entre Guillaume et Eudes, préjudiciable à la renommée du règne, derrière une prétendue expédition punitive contre les païens. Relatée 100 ans plus tard, est-elle l'écho chez Richer, familier des lignages chevaleresques chartrains, des luttes glorieuses d'Eudes et de ses fidèles contre les Normands (la maison de Blois prétendait descendre d'Ingon le palefrenier et l'aide de camp du roi) ? Est-ce tout simplement un retour du fameux thème de la perfidie aquitaine évoqué plus haut ? Peut-être Guillaume avait-il d'ailleurs avec lui une bande de Normands mercenaires. Ce qui nous importe, c'est le caractère épique qu'ont pris les événements : dans la légende, on n'a pu imaginer comme ennemis du roi que des Normands, fléau du temps, et ceci pour mieux cacher les résistances à la légitimité du Robertien dans ces régions hostiles. Qui gagne la bataille ? Y a-t-il vraiment victoire d'Eudes, comme nous le dit Richer ? Que penser de la capture du « tyran *Catillus* » ?[1] On constate en tout cas, - ce qui ne prêche pas pour la version officielle - que dès le mois de juillet, juste après Montpensier, les adversaires signent des accords de paix : Eudes en a besoin pour mieux lutter contre Charles et ses partisans qui ont rompu la trêve. En échange de sa reconnaissance théorique en Auvergne, le roi concède à Guillaume l'abbatiat de Brioude, laissé vacant par l'assassinat d'Adalgise. Il peut alors partir sur Limoges, puis Angoulême et Périgueux, où il s'assure la fidélité d'Adémar avant de remonter au Nord faire front.[2]

This may or may not be all correct, but although that 'les Aquitains de Montpensier deviennent des pirates normands' is quite conceivable it is Lauranson-Rosaz's throw-away conjecture that 'Peut-être Guillaume avait-il d'ailleurs avec lui une bande de Normands mercenaires', for which there is no evidence, which scholars such as Pascale Bourgain (in the first instance) have leapt upon to say for example that Richer 'mentionne lui aussi la présence de Normands dans les troupes du duc d'Aquitaine'.

[1] C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges*, n. 99, p. 40, says: '*Cadilo* est un nom très porté en Poitou dès le Xe siècle. GARAUD, « Les châtelains de Poitou et l'avènement du régime féodal, IXe et XIIe s. », dans *Mém. Soc. Antiq. de l'Ouest,* Poitiers, 1967, index p. 263, Cadelon, vicomte d'Aunay, dans la vicairie de Melle. On a aussi le prénom de Cotila, gothique (*Cart. Nîm*. n° 8, 893, vassal royal de Raymond). Il vaut mieux voir en *Catilus* un potentat local qu'un tyran (normand). On nous dit aussi (LATOUCHE… p. 67 n, 12) que Richer puise parfois son inspiration dans le *De Catilina* de Cicéron comme dans Salluste. *Cf.* également LAUER, *Louis IV*, p. 250, n° 1.' [The capitals here are those of Lauranson-Rosaz]. Many other ideas on the identity of *Catillus* have been offered which unfortunately I cannot explore here.

[2] C. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges*, p. 40.

We will leave this here. But if there was no confrontation between any Northmen and King Odo in either 892 or 893, which I think there was not, then we can also cease to consider the ideas of Bourgain and Pon that the battle at Montpensier is that *ad Destricios* mentioned in the *Miracles of Saint Genulf* and taken up by Ademar of Chabannes. Yet to repeat a little it is clear that the battle in the Limousin in 930 reported by Flodoard and that at *ad Destricios* by Ademar were one and the same, although we are still unclear as to its precise location.

The Breton revolt of 931

It might have been the news of the Northmen's heavy defeat in the Limousin in 930 that emboldened the Bretons in Cornouaille to revolt against the Northmen.[1] According to Flodoard in 931:

> On the solemnities of Saint Michael [29 September] the Bretons who had remained subdued by the Northmen in Cornouaille (*Cornu Galliae*) rose up against those who were holding them in their power. It was said that they killed all the Northmen who were found among them, and the first who died was their commander (*dux*), Felecan.[2]

Jean-Christophe Cassard says of the defeat in the Limousin in 930 that, 'Ce rude coup porte aux pirates explique sans doute la tranquillité qui régnait cette année-là [930] en Bretagne et il précipitera la révolte de 931'.[3]

Even if we are to follow Hubert Guillotel in identifying *Cornu Galliae* with Cornouaille we are not told where precisely this uprising took place in which *dux* Felecan and all his men were killed. It might have been somewhere in the vicinity of the Breton monastery of Landévennec which had been attacked and burned back in late 913. Another possibility is somewhere in the gulf of Morbihan opposite the Île de Groix where a tenth-century 'viking' ship burial was discovered in the nineteenth century,[4] or even though perhaps less likely on the Île de Groix

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[1] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 392, say regarding this victory of King Rodulf in 930 over 'les Normands de la Loire': 'Cette victoire ne fut pas aussi complète que Flodoard semble l'indiquer puisque l'année suivante lui-même leur fait accomplir une terrible campagne punitive en Bretagne […].'

[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 931: *Annales*, p. 50; *Annals*, p. 21. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 377-78, quoting Pierre Le Baud's story (in his *Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 132), derived supposedly from some lost annals, believed that Juhel Berenger of Rennes was the leader of this insurrection. Le Baud says this revolt took place at a place called 'Kan' or 'Cancale' (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine, in north-eastern Brittany near to Saint Malo). René Merlet proposed an interesting theory about this revolt and its location; see R. Merlet, 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931', which although very stimulating I do not find convincing.

[3] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Viking en Bretagne*, p. 91. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 376-77, thought that after this heavy defeat various Northmen left their 'posts' in Brittany and massed on the Loire and that this, plus the defeat in 930, gave the 'poor Bretons' the courage to revolt.

[4] For the Viking ship-burial on the Île de Groix see L. Tarrou, *Corpus du mobilier de type scandinave (IXe-XIe siècles) découvert en France : Bretagne, Normandie et Pays de la Loire* ; *eadem*, 'La sépulture à bateau viking de

itself.[1] There are several other possibilities. But for our purposes what Flodoard's report makes very clear is that a group of Northmen had established at least one base in Brittany at some point in the previous years. This might have been soon after the Northmen came to Brittany in *c*.918-919, but equally any base or initial 'settlement' could have been established as a 'satellite' after the 921 'concession' of Brittany to Ragenold's Northmen. Whatever the precise timing may have been, news of this Breton uprising and Felecan's death clearly soon reached the Northmen based on the Loire because not long afterwards in the same year Flodoard tells us:

> The Northman Incon, who was staying on the Loire invaded Brittany with his men. He gained possession of the region after defeating, plundering, killing and expelling the Bretons.[2]

This very much looks like an act of reprisal for and a repression of the revolt of the 'Cornouaille' Bretons. According to Hubert Guillotel, 'Il s'agit là de l'expédition punitive montée depuis le Nantais pour venger le meurtre de Félécan et de ses compagnons'.[3] If so this might suggest that both Felecan and Incon were originally part of the same Scandinavian force or at least that they were closely linked.[4]

The names Incon and Felecan are unusual for Scandinavian chieftains because they do not appear to be Germanic/Scandinavian, rather they seem to be 'Celtic'. Regarding the name Incon, Joëlle Quaghebeur linked it to the Scandinavian name Hakon,[5] while Neil Price followed by Fraser McNair believe Incon was a Brittonic/Breton name.[6] In regard to the name Felecan,

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l'île de Groix (Morbihan)'; J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', pp. 120-21; F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons? The Language of Factional Politics in Late Carolingian Brittany', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 11 (2015), pp. 183-202', at pp. 193-94; M. Müller-Wille, 'Das Schiffsgrab von der Ile de Groix (Bretagne)'.

[1] F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons?', p. 193, suggests the ship-burial on the Île de Groix might even have been Felecan's. J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', p. 121, suggests it is the inhumation of a Scandinavian chieftain came 'perhaps' from Ireland or from a continental colony.

[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 931, *Annales*, pp. 51-52; *Annals*, p. 21: 'Incon Nordmannus qui morabatur in Ligeri, cum suis Britanniam pervadit, victisque et pervasis et caesis vel ejectis Britonnibus regione potitur.'

[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 392.

[4] Cf. J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', pp. 122, 125, n. 73; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 376-83. Against this see R. Merlet's theory in 'La victoire de Cancale remportée par les Bretons sur les Normands en l'année 931'.

[5] J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', pp. 122-23. Some historians have suggested that this Hakon/Incon may have been vaguely remembered in the late *Roman d'Aiquin*. For a discussion of this see É. Ridel, 'Les Vikings en Bretagne et la Chanson d'Aiquin : réalités et imaginaires', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc*, pp. 109-118; N. Lenoir, *Étude sur la "Chanson d'Aiquin" ou "La conquête de la Bretagne par le roi Charlemagne"* (Paris, 2009), and J.-C. Cassard, 'Propositions pour une lecture historique croisée du Roman d'Aiquin', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 178 (2002), pp. 111-27.

[6] N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 45/363; *idem*, 'Viking Brittany: Revisiting the Colony that Failed', in A. Reynolds and L. E. Webster (eds.), *Early medieval art and archaeology in the northern world: studies in honour of James Graham-Campbell* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 731-42, at p. 733; F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons?', p. 192.

Lucien Musset proposed that it was likely of Irish origin,[1] Gillian Fellows-Jensen thought that it was Scottish,[2] and Bernard Tanguy thought the name Felecan could be linked with a Welsh word meaning 'chief'.[3] Quaghebeur opts for the more general statement that the name Felecan is 'un patronyme d'origine celtique'.[4] Price and McNair suggest that Felecan is also a Brittonic name, indeed more specifically a Breton name meaning 'little Felec'.[5] There is nothing inherently unreasonable in this latter suggestion from an onomastic point of view, the problem is rather that it supposedly implies, as McNair states, that Felecan was both born and brought up in a Breton environment: 'As the bearer of a Brittonic name, Felecan was clearly not named by parents looking to actively promote a Northman identity through their child's name'; adding that it is 'likely' that 'Felecan's background was among Breton speakers and that it is 'likely' he was 'raised in a Breton-speaking environment'.[6] But where and when Felecan and Incon could have been born and raised in a Breton-speaking environment is not explored. The whole idea of Felecan and indeed Incon being Breton names given to them on their birth in a Breton-speaking environment is implicitly premised among other things on McNair's suggestion that 'there was a continuous Viking presence on the lower Loire for about three-quarters of a century [from 843!] before 919, with Vikings maintaining a permanent camp on the Loire estuary and possibly upstream from there'.[7] But as has been shown in previous chapters there was categorically no uninterrupted or permanent Scandinavian or 'viking' presence on the lower Loire from 843 until 919, still less in Brittany proper, and I find it impossible to find likely dates or places where Northmen with the 'Breton' names Felecan and Incon could have received their names and been brought up in a Breton-speaking environment. In McNair's story Incon 'the bearer of a Breton name' just appears as Ragenold's successor on the lower Loire sometime after the latter's death, which he places 'probably' in 924,[8] whilst Felecan was just the 'duke of the Northmen in Cornouaille',[9] since when is not said.

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[1] L. Musset, 'Participation des Vikings venus des pays celtes à la colonisation scandinave de Normandie', *Cahiers du centre de recherche sur les pays du Nord et du Nord-Ouest* (Caen, 1978), pp. 107-117, reprinted in *Nordica et Normannica* (1997), pp. 279-96, at p. 281.
[2] G. Fellows-Jensen, 'Les noms de lieu d'origine scandinave et la colonisation viking en Normandie. Examen critique de la question', *Proxima Thulé*, 1 (1994), pp. 63-103.
[3] Quoted by J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', p. 124, n. 67.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 124.
[5] N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 45/363; *idem*, 'Viking Brittany: Revisiting the Colony that Failed', p. 733; F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons?', p. 192.
[6] F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons?', p. 192.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 186. McNair references Neil Price here (*The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 32); but in fact Price says nothing to this effect on the page referenced or elsewhere, it is McNair's own supposition and it is, I think, probably incorrect.
[8] F. McNair, 'Vikings and Bretons?', pp. 187, 193
[9] *Ibid*.

The Northmen operating on the Loire in 927 whom Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois failed to remove were clearly not led by Ragenold, so who were they and who was their leader? The only name that comes to mind is Incon, whether he was the bearer of a Celtic name or a 'Norwegian' called Hakon. There is no reason to imagine this force being led by yet another unnamed leader. Yet, as noted earlier, Incon can only realistically have had two possible origins. Either he really was a commander who had taken over Ragenold's force after his death in *c*.925, or, if Ragenold's Northmen had retreated to Rouen after their raid into Burgundy in late 924 and their escape from near encirclement on the upper Seine in early 925, then he must have been the commander of another fleet that had either been on the Loire at the same time as Ragenold in the early 920s, or slightly more likely Incon and his fleet had only come to the lower Loire in 927 or somewhat before (perhaps even from Cornouaille), taking the opportunity offered by Ragenold's withdrawal from the area and subsequent death. All we are doing here is looking at the most reasonable alternatives.

Whether Felecan and Incon had some sort of prior relationship, which was possibly the case because Incon did seem to come to exact revenge for the Bretons' rebellion and massacre in 931, we still cannot be sure when Felecan and Incon had arrived in Brittany or on the lower Loire. They could well have been part of Ragenold's original fleet which had been raiding along the coast of Brittany in 919 or at least as likely leaders of a distinct fleet/fleets who had affiliated or associated themselves with Ragenold. Given the fact that neither Nantes and the lower Loire nor Brittany had been 'occupied' by Northmen for decades before, as claimed by Price and McNair, and given at least Felecan's likely Celtic name, and Incon's name which is either also Celtic or 'Norwegian', perhaps we must look for their origin in an Irish Sea milieu as Lucien Musset once suggested? Here we can only make some speculations. If both Felecan and Incon had first come to Brittany in *c*.918-919 then we should perhaps look to the Scandinavian 'exile' from Ireland after 902, until some of them returned to Ireland from 914 to 917 and the taking of York in 919. Alternatively, if Felecan and Incon had been part of Ragenold's original fleet or associated with it then they might have come to Brittany from the lower Seine, as Ragenold might have as well. The paucity of our sources will never enable us to be sure.

The information we have from Flodoard is really all we know about the Breton revolt in 931. However, this sparse history is confronted with some elaborate tales, or fables as Arthur de La Borderie and Lucien Musset called them, of Dudo of Saint-Quentin (followed by Hugh of Fleury), in which Dudo brings the Rouen-based Northman William Longsword into the picture,

and indeed places him centre stage.[1] Dudo's stories have led many historians to accept what Éric Van Torhoudt has called an ephemeral push to the West into Brittany by William Longsword in the early 930s,[2] a 'push' that is generally linked to the crushing of the Breton uprising in 931 against their Scandinavian oppressors and the killing of the Northmen's leader Felecan as told of by Flodoard. The present conventional wisdom is encapsulated by Hubert Guillotel who says that there was 'une double campagne de représaille menée d'un côté par les Normands de la Loire sous la direction d'Incon, d'autre par les Normands de la Seine conduits par Guillaume Longue-Epée'.[3] Similar statements are made by countless other historians. Dudo's stories have also been used to suggest that Alan Barbe-Torte first attempted a return from England to Brittany in 931 before retreating again across the Channel only to come back in 936 to start the reconquest of Brittany.[4] As Henri Prentout put it long ago: 'les chefs normands, en Bretagne, sont Inkon, Félékan. Dudon met partout à leur place Rollon et Guillaume Longue-Epée. Dudon fait intervenir les chefs bretons dans les affaires du Normandie',[5] and it should be said vice versa. More recently Eric Christiansen wrote that Dudo's story 'tells of an imaginary revolt of the Bretons against the Normans, partly based on Flodoard's account of how in 933 William was granted Breton lands by the sea, possibly to embroil him with the vikings who held Brittany further west'.[6] Arthur de La Borderie also long ago wrote a withering and persuasive debunking of all Dudo's 'fables', as he called them, regarding the Seine Northmen's purported involvement in, and control of, Brittany from 911 to the 930s, introducing which he says 'Dudon a altéré la physionomie des faits au point d'en changer la nature et d'en faire disparaître la verité'.[7] From my own analysis of this matter I think Dudo's story of William Longsword's purported involvement in suppressing the Breton uprising in the early 930s should be discounted, as much more certainly should a supposed first and unsuccessful return of Alan Barbe-Torte to Brittany in 931. It can be shown that Dudo's

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 183-85; trans. Christiansen, pp. 61-63.
[2] Cf. É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, pp. 150-54; *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne', pp. 602-13.
[3] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 393.
[4] For example A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 393: 'Alain fils de Mathuédoï, l'ancien comte de Poher, revenu d'Angleterre a soulevé la Cornouaille, dénomination qui se substituait à celle de Poher, son échec l'a contraint à un nouvel exil en Angleterre; J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 78: 'Alain, fils de Matuedoi, revenu d'exil, tenta de recouvrer ses droits sur le comté de Cornouaille, tentative qui se solda par un échec car il dut repartir auprès de son parrain, le roi Athelstan.' É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 150, links this imaginary first return of Alan to a push west of William Longsword's Rouen Northmen, he says: 'L'avancée normande de 933 est étroitement liée à l'échec d'une tentative de restauration politique des princes bretons.'
[5] H. Prentout, *Étude critique*, pp. 204-5. But before his *Étude critique* Prentout wrote a very strange article on these matters, see H. Prentout, 'Les limites de la Bretagne et de la Normandie au Xe siècle. La bataille de Caen (931)', *Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive* (1912), pp. 268-73.
[6] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 198, n. 234.
[7] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, 'Les fables de Dudon de Saint-Quentin', pp. 496-504, at p. 498.

tale is just an embellished repackaging or recasting of various borrowings from Flodoard's *Annals*, while Hugh of Fleury's supposed 'independent evidence' is not actually independent at all and should be disregarded from a historical point of view. There are good reasons to doubt whether this supposed 'push' westwards to Brittany in *c*.931-33 ever happened at all, and there is no doubt whatever that the concession in 933 of Brittany to William Longsword was not the third and final part of an early expansion of 'Normandy'. Unfortunately, I do not have space to examine this issue further here.[1]

A last raid into Berry, Alan Barbe-Torte's return and the expulsion of the Northmen, 935-939

The last raid into Aquitaine proper in the tenth century we know of with any certainty took place in the autumn of 935.

According to Flodoard: 'The Northmen who had plundered the *pagus* of Bourges were destroyed in battle by the men of Berry and the Touraine.'[2] No context is given. The attack into Berry just comes out of the blue. We can reasonably assume it came from the Loire, both because the men of Tours were involved and because we know what the Rouen Northmen were doing at this time in Francia. Given that the Northmen were defeated by the local forces of Tours and Bourges without any support from King Rodulf, who was again ill at the time,[3] or any major magnates such as Hugh the Great, this does seem to have been a relatively small-scale raid possibly because of the losses sustained in the great battle in 930 in the Limousin and/or because Incon's Loire Northmen had been sent to Brittany in 931.

As will be seen below after this date the Northmen were expelled from Nantes in *c*.936-37 by Alan Barbe-Torte after his return to Brittany from England in 936, but they managed to keep their presence in Brittany for a further three years during which time, and after a number of fights, they were finally defeated and expelled in 939, probably at Trans in the Dolois.

[1] I have an article in preparation on this subject which I hope will one day see the light of day.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 935: *Annales*, p. 62; *Annals*, p. 26. Bourges was, to use an anachronistic term, the 'capital' of northern Aquitaine.
[3] *Ibid*.

Alan the Great's grandson Alan Barbe-Torte had grown up in exile at King Æthelstan's court alongside Charles the Simple's son Louis IV (d'Outremer).[1] They both returned to their homes in 936.[2]

King Rodulf had died at Auxerre on 14 or 15 January 936[3] and Hugh the Great had immediately summoned Louis back to Francia where he soon landed at Boulogne and was crowned without delay as king of West Francia at Laon on 19 June.[4] But at exactly the same time Flodoard also reports: 'The Bretons from across the sea, with the support of King Æthelstan, returned and took back their land.'[5] Alan's return had been negotiated by the abbot of Landévennec called John,[6] not just in his personal capacity but also because his monastery was in possession of real rights relative to the defence and government of Cornouaille.[7] John of Landévennec's involvement is most illuminating. In a charter/notice in the cartulary of the abbey of Landévennec we read that Alan, *duc* of the Bretons, ordered Jean, the abbot of Landévennec, to make an inventory of the lands of his abbey and that he made a gift to the abbey of various lands in the Nantais in return for the services John had rendered. What were these services? The notice says, using Hubert Guillotel's translation:

> Alain a donné de ses biens propres à saint Guénolé et à son abbé Jean, parce que celui-ci l'avait appelé de ce côté-ci de la mer et l'y avait invité, parce que Amalgod et Guéthénoc,

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[1] Both were certainly under Æthelstan's protection, and Richer of Reims even says that the embassy of Hugh the Great to organise Louis's return had met Æthelstan in York where Louis was with him (cf. Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 2, pp. 160-63). In regard to Alan, Joëlle Quaghebeur once suggested that although under Æthelstan's protection Alan had spent his exile in Wales; cf. J. Quaghebeur, 'La maison d'Alfred : un lignage noble du sud de Bretagne (IXe-XIe siècles)', in D. Barthélemy and O. Bruand (eds.), *Les pouvoirs locaux dans la France du Centre et de l'ouest (VIIIe-XIe siècles). Implantation et moyens d'actions* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 137-56, at p. 142. This is an interesting idea but as yet I can find no evidence for it. Elsewhere J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 81, n. 330, says: 'Louis IV et Alain Barbe-Torte se côtoyèrent certainement à la cours d'Aethelstan.'

[2] There is no evidence that the Rouen Northman William Longsword had any involvement in either of these returns despite Dudo of Saint-Quentin's assertion that he was instrumental in arranging both. For which see P. Lauer, *La règne de Louis IV*, pp. 11 and n. 1, who also adds that, 'Ce sont là des exagérations que Dudon se permet continuellement pour grandir son héros'. On the other hand, Hubert Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 400) suggests regarding the supposed involvement of William Longsword in the return of Louis IV d'Outremer in 936 that on the basis of Flodoard's testimony and the case of John of Landévennec the 'l'autorité de Dudon sort renforcée de cet examen'. I simply do not agree with this; strangely Guillotel and some of his followers tend to believe in the historical veracity of Dudo's stories, which I generally do not.

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 936: *Annales*, p. 63; *Annals*, p. 28; Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chap. 65, pp. 154-55. For the date see P. Lauer, *La règne de Louis IV*, p. 2.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 936: *Annales*, p. 63; *Annals*, p. 28; Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 1-4, pp. 158-71.

[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 936: *Annales*, p. 63; *Annals*, p. 28.

[6] For John of Landévennec's important role in negotiating Alan's return see *inter alia* H. Guillotel, *Le premier siècle*, pp. 69-73; J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, pp. 57, 97; *eadem*, 'Norvège et Bretagne', pp. 128-29; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 93; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 385-87; S. Foot, *Æthelstan*, p. 168; E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, pp. 201-2, nn. 259, 260.

[7] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 57.

> les fidèles de l'abbé, s'étaient engagés par serment sur l'autel de saint Pierre apôtre avant sa venue et parce que ce même Jean s'était entremis avec succès auprès des barbares de la plupart des peuplades saxonnes et normandes et - ici une lacune - parce que à de nombreuses reprises, sans se lasser et à notre joie, il avait annoncé la paix des deux côtés de la mer.'[1]

So, John had gone back and forth across the Channel to try to agree the conditions for Alan's return, quite possibly visiting Æthelstan's court[2] much as Hugh the Great's emissaries, possibly led by William the archbishop of Sens, had gone to England to arrange Louis IV's return.[3] He had also had contact with the Northmen and thought he had agreed a 'peace' between them, and so King Æthelstan agreed to and helped Alan's return to a Brittany he barely if at all knew.

Is it possible that Hugh the Great had also had a hand in Alan's return as he had in Louis's? According to Hubert Guillotel, 'il faut raisonnablement le supposer'.[4] Guillotel then pointedly adds, 'N'est-ce que pas lui [Hugh] qui avait tenté de déloger les Normands de la Loire en 927, comme son père Robert en 921 ? Pouvait-il se désintéresser du choix du futur comte de Nantes et duc de Bretagne ?'.[5] Whatever the case, there are both similarities and differences between the returns of Louis and Alan. In the former's case Louis was immediately recognised and crowned by the *principes* and bishops of the realm.[6] But over the next few years he still had to try to wipe out the troublesome Northmen established on the lower Seine led by William Longsword, and from 942 his young son Richard, and he also had to contend with Hugh the Great who although he had arranged Louis's return soon started to oppose him. At least according to the evidence of the *Chronicle of Nantes* Alan too was very soon recognised by the Breton nobles, not just those who had been with him in England but also by those who had been

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[1] H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', p. 71. For the original Latin text see H. Guillotel, *Les actes des ducs de Bretagne (944-1148)*, eds. P. Charon, P. Guigon, C. Henry, M. Jones, K. Keats-Rohan, and J.-C. Meuret (Rennes, 2014), no. 2, pp. 152-54; *Cartulaire de Landévennec*, eds. R.-F.-L. Le Men and É. Ernault (Paris, 1886), pp. 562- 64, no. 25; *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Landévennec*, ed. A. de la Borderie (Rennes, 1888), pp. 156-58, no. 25.

[2] S. Foot, *Æthelstan*, p. 168. For a very slightly different interpretation see A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 385-87.

[3] Cf. P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV,* p. 12 and n. 3.

[4] H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', p. 72.

[5] *Ibid*. É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 178: 'En 936, il [Hugh] fut probablement le principal artisan de l'avènement de Louis à la royauté ainsi que du retour d'Alain en Bretagne puisque la plupart des protagonistes étaient ses parents.'

[6] Although there were some notable absentees, cf. J.-F. Lemarignier, 'Les fidèles du roi de France (936-987)', in *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel: Par ses amis, collèques et élèves* (Paris, 1955), vol. 2, pp. 138-62, at pp. 143-44. J. Quaghebeur, 'Norvège et Bretagne', pp. 129-30, believes in the historicity of Dudo's stories and thus makes the 'Northmen' whom Abbot Jean negotiated with those of William Longsword. She also finds no place for the Franks of Hugh the Great, 'peut-être en raison de la difficulté à déterminer les relations futures entre le royaume de Francie et l'ancien *regnum* de Bretagne'. But she adds: 'Pourtant le *dux* Hugues ne pouvait voir sans inquiétude un *rex* regagner la Bretagne : des négociations durent nécessairement se dérouler avec le milieu France, car il s'agissait de rappeler la qualité de royaume subordonné jusqu'alors dévolu à la Bretagne.'

furtively living in Brittany. Regarding Alan's return, after mentioning the mediation and negotiations of Abbot Jean, Hubert Guillotel says: 'Le retour d'Alain ne s'est donc point déroulé à la faveur des combats, mais après que la paix eut assuré.'[1] But any 'peace' was certainly not assured, it turned out to have been illusory, because as J. Quaghebeur rightly says 'il lui restait à reconquérir son pays'.[2] Alan and the Bretons had to spend the next three years in defeating the Northmen at Nantes and elsewhere in Brittany before they could be rid of them for good and Alan could finally claim his inheritance, and more.

We know that John of Landévennec had 'many times' shuttled 'beyond and on this side of the sea'[3] between the Saxons, that is the West Saxons of Æthelstan, and the Northmen, to try to assure Alan's return, but clearly the Northmen in Brittany had not really been reconciled to his return,[4] because in 937 Flodoard tells us that: 'After a long exile, the Bretons returned to their places and fought many battles against the Northmen, who had invaded that land which was next to their own. The Bretons won many of the encounters and took over the places that the Northmen had invaded.'[5] I believe we can place the victory over the Northmen at Nantes in this year of 937.[6] This victory is discussed shortly. Indeed, this resistance continued for two more years because in 939: 'The Bretons fought against the Northmen and gained the victory. It was said they captured a certain *castellum* of the Northmen',[7] which might have been the fortification at Vieux M'na situated about fifteen kilometres south-east of Dol in the commune of Trans.[8] According to a fragment of Breton annals this last victory in 939 took place at Trans (dep. Ille-et-Vilaine, cant. Pleine-Fougères) just east of Dol, and was won by a coalition of Juhel-Bérenger Count of Rennes, Alan Count of Nantes and Count Hugh of Le Mans,[9] a statement and location that has been accepted by almost all historians.[10]

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 81.
[3] S. Foot, *Æthelstan*, p. 168.
[4] Or as H. Guillotel ('Le premier siècle', pp. 72-73) puts it: 'Certes les Scandinaves ne se résignèrent pas tous au retour des Bretons […] des poches de résistance subsistèrent en Bretagne avant d'être progressivement résorbées.'
[5] Flodoard: *Annales*, p. 68; *Annals*, p. 30.
[6] For which see A. de la Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 390-96.
[7] Flodoard: *Annales*, p. 74; *Annals*, p. 32.
[8] Cf. J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 95, 62-63.
[9] The text was edited by A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 397, n. 2. Cf. also P. Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 134.
[10] See, for example, H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', p. 73; J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 81; A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 396-98; J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 95. É. Van Torhoudt, 'La résistance franco-bretonne à l'expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954) : une marche de Normandie ?', p. 611 says: 'Le rétablissement breton dans le Nantais et le Poher en 936 n'avait pas concerné les abords de la Normandie. Mais trois ans plus tard, la reconquête bretonne, vigoureusement entreprise depuis 937, atteignit les rives du Couesnon. Les princes Alain Barbetorte et Juhel-Bérenger de Rennes remportèrent à Trans, à l'est de Dol, une victoire sur un parti de Normands.' J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 95, says: 'Une autre expédition sera encore mentionnée en 939; le Ier aout de cette année une grosse bande viking capitule à Trans […] L'archéologie est venue confirmer les assertions [of the location of

Before moving on we must mention what the chronicler of Nantes wrote about Alan's return.[1] I will use J.-C. Cassard's excellent summary translation:

> Ainsi la cité de Nantes resta abandonnée, ruinée, couverte de ronces et d'épines jusqu'à ce que Alain Barbetorte, le petit-fils d'Alain le Grand, se dressât et chassât complètement les Normands de toute la Bretagne et de la Loire. Cet Alain, élevé depuis son enfance par le roi des Angles Athelstan, avait une forte constitution et beaucoup de courage. Quand il chassait des ours ou des sangliers, il ne les tuait pas avec une épée mais avec des bâtons pris dans la forêt. Ayant, avec les Bretons qui survivaient, réuni quelques bateaux avec l'accord du roi, il revint en Bretagne. Se dirigeant d'abord vers le monastère de Dol,[2] il y trouva une bande de Normands fêtant des noces. Les attaquant à l'improviste, il les décapita. Apprenant alors qu'une autre bande se trouvait à Saint-Brieuc, il s'y rendit par la mer et passa par le glaive tous les Normands qu'il y trouva. A cette nouvelle les Normands dispersés à travers toute la Bretagne abandonnèrent la région. Quant aux Bretons, après la fuite des Normands, venant de partout vers Alain, ils le placèrent à leur tête et en firent leur duc.
>
> Au milieu de ces évènements, on apprit qu'une grande armée de Normands se trouvait à Nantes où elle désirait se fixer.[3] Le duc Alain, réunissant de nombreux guerriers, chevaucha jusqu'à cette ville. Trouvant les Normands établis sur le Pré-Saint-Aignan, il entama le combat contre eux. Mais les Normands, méprisant son courage, le repoussèrent jusqu'au sommet d'une colline. Là Alain, accablé de fatigue, souffrant de la soif, se mit à pleurer et à invoquer par d'humbles prières la Bienheureuse Mère de Dieu pour qu'elle daignât le secourir et faire soudre une fontaine d'eau vive pour les désaltérer, lui et ses soldats, et leur rendre ainsi leurs forces. Répondant à ses prières, la Vierge Marie ouvrit

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Trans]: à 500 mètres environ du camp viking du Vieux M'na on a fouille en 1979 le Camp des Haies […]. Il s'agit presque certainement du retranchement de siège de l'armée d'Alain : élevé à la hâte, ce camp a livré des poteries qui pourraient être de facture britannique et viendraient donc rappeler le lieu de regroupement du corps expéditionnaire qui accompagnait Alain lors de son retour.'

[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chaps. 29-32, pp. 87-97.

[2] H. Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 399) makes much of the fact that the chronicler of Nantes mentions a 'monastery' at Dol, when the abbey there had been elevated to a cathedral church for more than a century. But that Dol was a logical place for Alan to make landfall can be suggested not just by its geographical position in relation to southern England but also because there were close ties between Dol and the West Saxon kings. For example, William of Malmesbury quoted a letter written in *c*.927 from Radbod, the prior of the cathedral church of St Samson at Dol, to King Æthelstan, a letter accompanied by the gift of the bones of some Breton saints; cf. S. Foot, *Æthelstan*, pp. 190-92, also pp. 103-4; J. M. H. Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 196-201; A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 390.

[3] Alan was clearly further north when he heard this news. After their defeats at Dol and Saint-Brieuc the Northmen had collected their forces at Nantes. The battle at Nantes likely happened in 937; cf. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 391-95.

pour celui qui avait soif une source d'eau vive, qu'on nomme depuis la source Sainte-Marie.

L'illustre duc Alain et ceux qui étaient là, buvant à satiété l'eau de cette source, recouvrirent des forces. Ainsi réconfortés, ils voulurent reprendre le combat. Attaquant bravement les Normands et tous ceux qui leur résistaient, ils les décapitèrent tous à l'exception de ceux qui prirent la fuite. Les Normands, terrifiés, s'enfuirent en descendant le cours de la Loire.

Alain, une fois les Normands vaincus et mis en fuite dans toute la Bretagne, pénétra dans la ville de Nantes désertée depuis plusieurs années. Pour se rendre à l'église des saints apôtres Pierre et Paul, il dut se frayer un chemin avec son épée à travers d'épais buissons d'épines et de ronces. Arrivant à l'église, il la trouva sans toit, réduite à des murs à demi écroulés. Alain et les autre Bretons ses compagnons implorèrent ensemble les suffrages des apôtres et déplorèrent l'état de leur belle église. Après avoir examiné tous les avantages de la cité, à l'intérieur comme l'extérieur, Alain décida d'en faire sa résidence principale. Il ordonna à tous les Bretons de venir à Nantes charges de vivres et d'établir un grand rempart de terre autour de l'église, analogue au mur de l'ancien château. Quand cela fut faire, il construisit ou fit reconstruire un donjon où il établit sa demeure.

Les comtes, les vicomtes et les *machtierns* de toute la Bretagne qui avait fui dans différentes régions et qui étaient encore en vie, apprenant que cet Alain était le duc et le seigneur de toute la Bretagne après avoir mis en fuite et chassé tous les Normands, accoururent avec joie auprès de lui.[1]

The story continues by telling how one of the first Bretons who came back to Nantes was Hesdren, the bishop of St Pol (Saint-Pol-de-Léon), whom Alan made bishop of Nantes because the previous bishop, Adalard, was dead. With the help of some clerics who had returned to Nantes, Alan then set about discovering all the lands, rents, privileges etc. belonging to the church - the charters having been lost during the Northmen's occupation - and he divided the *tonlieu* of the town into three parts.[2] Finally, we are told how after all the Northmen had been chased away and he was master of all Brittany including the county of Rennes and the Breton territories on the other side of the Loire, he shared these latter with William Towhead.[3]

[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 88-89.
[2] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 31, pp. 94-96.
[3] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 32, pp. 96-97.

There is much in this story of Alan Barbe-Torte that is of a quasi-legendary nature,[1] but there is also much that seems true, and some of which can be confirmed by later evidence.

Returning to the Northmen, although the Rouen Northmen had probably not been involved in putting down the Breton rebellion in 931, could they have had any part in these later battles in 937 and 939? Some historians believe so. In 933 according to Flodoard: 'William [Longsword], the *princeps* of the Northmen, committed himself to the king [Rodulf], who then gave William, the land of the Bretons located along the sea coast.'[2] As with the earlier grant in 924 a number of historians try to correct Flodoard here, making this mean that William was granted just the Cotentin and the Avranchin and not all of Brittany.[3] This assertion is usually made without any justification and is purely arbitrary.[4] But Éric Van Torhoudt argues that the concession could well concern the whole of the Breton littoral 'de la baie des Veys à l'estuaire de la Loire'.[5] This is based in part on the equivalence of the expressions used by Flodoard in 919 concerning Cornouaille (or *Cornu Galliae* to be more precise) that 'Nordmanni omnem *Britanniam, in ora scilicet maritima sitam* depopulantur […], and in 933, ' […] cui etiam rex dat terram *Brittonum in ora maritima sitam*'.[6] Whichever parts of the Breton coastline were meant by Flodord, Rodulf had no authority or command over any of it. Thus, it is usually concluded that William had been granted a *droit de conquête* over all or parts of Brittany.[7] But

[1] For which see in particular J. Quaghebeur, 'Alain Barbe-Torte ou le retour improbable d'un prince en sa terre'.
[2] Flodoard: *Annales*, p. 55; *Annals*, p. 23.
[3] This common idea goes back to P. Lauer, *Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 71, and before him to A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 396, 378-79 (1898). On the other hand, J. Lair, *Dudo*, pp. 71-72 (1865), trying as always and rather desperately to support Dudo maintains that the grant of 933 by Rodulf gave back to William Longsword what Charles the Simple had granted Rollo in 911, but which the Rouen Northmen had only later taken 'by conquest', supposedly in 931 and after, plus the two dioceses of Coutances and Avranches which Lair maintains Rollo's Northmen had actually occupied since 911. It is all rather self-serving and muddled. Similarly, in England, E. A. Freeman even wrote in 1867: 'This grant [by Rodulf in 933] most likely carried with it both a general confirmation of the superiority of Normandy over Brittany and a special confirmation of the transfer of Avranches and Coutances to the immediate dominion of the Norman Duke': cf. E. A. Freeman, *The history of the Norman conquest of England, its causes and its results*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1867), p. 197. For a brief discussion see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, pp. 395-97.
[4] Hubert Guillotel, who like many historians before and after limits the concession to the Cotentin and the Avranchin, says, 'elle ne pouvait viser le littoral du comte de Rennes et son arrière-pays, qui ne furent progressivement intégrés à la Normandie qu'à partir de 1009', see A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 39, to which Éric Van Torhoudt pointedly responds: 'Or je crois que l'on ne peut pas déduire de la situation de l'an mil les contours des influences territoriales de premier tiers du Xe siècle, surtout pour en conclure ensuite que les frontières de la Normandie furent exceptionnellement précises dès l'origine': É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité* , vol. 1, p. 149.
[5] É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, vol. 1, p. 150.
[6] My italics.
[7] *Ibid*., vol 1, p. 152; *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne', p. 613; P. Bauduin, 'Les débuts du duché de Normandie', in É. Ridel (ed.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc*, pp. 64-71, at p. 66: 'un droit de conquête à l'ouest de la Vire.' Much the same is often said of the grants of 924, for example see P. Bauduin, 'Chefs normands et élites franques', p. 192, where these grants are called 'territoires à conquérir'. In a certain sense this must be right, but the Rouen Northmen never did conquer these territories, or at least not (and then only partially) until very much later.

why had Rodulf made this ultimately vacuous concession to William Longsword?[1] Rodulf had probably made this hollow gesture in an attempt to turn the Seine Northmen away from any possible future support of his enemy Herbert de Vermandois. In late 927 Herbert had taken King Charles out of imprisonment and took him to meet the Northmen at the *castellum* of Eu. There 'Rollo's son [William Longsword] committed himself to Charles and affirmed his friendship with Herbert'.[2] Early in 928, after Herbert had occupied Laon, he held a *placitum* there with the Northmen and he and Hugh the Great 'made friendship with them'. However, Herbert's son Odo was still being held hostage by Rollo and 'was not returned to his father until Herbert and certain other counts and bishops of Francia committed themselves to Charles'.[3] Later the same year, 929, Herbert put Charles back in jail and committed himself to Rodulf.[4] The fights and machinations between Rodulf, Hugh the Great, Herbert of Vermandois and others[5] continued and loyalties and alliances continually shifted. But by 931 Herbert had deserted King Rodulf and they became long-term enemies.[6] It is in this context that we must view the concession made by Rodulf to William Longsword in 933. King Charles had died in prison in 929, but as Eric Christiansen says 'Herbert had been allied to Rollo and William since 927'.[7] By 933 Rodulf's position was precarious and by getting William Longsword to commit to him in return for 'the land of the Bretons that was located along the sea coast' he was most likely just trying to ensure that the Rouen Northmen did not side with his enemies, in particular with Herbert of Vermandois.[8]

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[1] H. Guillotel (A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 397) says: 'Afin d'obtenir la recommandation du chef normand le roi qui se trouvait en position de faiblesse, lui accordait un large territoire.' I would agree with this, but then Guillotel adds that this territory was 'probablement en cours d'annexion!', which is just conjecture based on a belief in Dudo's story of William's fights with the revolting Bretons. J.-C. Cassard closely follows Guillotel, after repeating the, by now, conventional wisdom that the 933 grant was limited to the counties of Avranches and Coutances, he says that these counties were 'en fait déjà en cours d'annexion par la Normandie', and then adds: 'Dans ce cas, contre une vague promesse de fidélité Guillaume Longue-Epée reçoit du roi un beau cadeau qui satisfait ses ambitions territoriales, au moins pour un temps: dès lors il serait impolitique de sa part qu'il soutînt à l'avenir ses lointains compatriotes des bords de Loire.'

[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 927: *Annales*, pp. 39-40; *Annals*, p. 17.

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 928: *Annales*, p. 41; *Annals*, p. 17. Odo was eventually released but we only hear of him next in 933 (cf. Flodoard *s.a.* 933, *Annales*, p. 56; *Annals*, p. 23), so when and how he was released is unknown. It is likely that it is from these reports of Flodoard for 928-29 that Dudo of Saint-Quentin borrowed when he wrote (Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 186; trans. Christiansen, p. 64): 'And so about that time, he [William Longsword] joined himself by mutual agreement in a short-lived treaty of friendship with duke Hugh. And from then onwards he was also allied in a fragile pact of amity with the satrap Herbert.' Dudo placed these agreements after William's supposed fights with the Bretons and before the purported 'revolt' of Riulf, hence implicitly and wrongly in the early 930s.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 929: *Annales*, p. 45; *Annals*, p. 18.

[5] Including Rodulf's brother Boso and the German king Henry the Fowler.

[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 931-33: *Annales*, pp. 46-57; *Annals*, pp. 20-24.

[7] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 200, n. 242.

[8] According to Dudo of Saint-Quentin (Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 192-93; trans. Christiansen, pp. 69-70) William Longsword convened a great assembly at Lyons-la-Forêt (dep. Eure, arr. Andelys) to which, believably or not, came Herbert of Vermandois, Hugh the Great and William Towhead, count of Poitou. Here, on the advice of Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois, William Longsword gave his sister in marriage to William Towhead. Herbert

For our present purposes the most important question is this: Did the concession of 933 have any real consequences on the ground? The earlier grant in 924, which was also made with Rodulf's consent, had had no effect at all and the Seine Northmen never occupied Le Mans or Bayeux, but was it different this time?

It is conceivable that the fights between the Bretons and the Northmen in 937 and 939 had involved William's Seine-based Northmen although nothing in Flodoard's wording suggests it. It is true that from 933 to early 939 we hear nothing more of William Longsword; could he have been involved in what Van Torhoudt calls an ephemeral push west in these years?[1] Chronologically this is possible for the fights in 937 but still very unlikely,[2] but this is even less likely for those in 939 culminating perhaps in a battle at Trans.[3] In his reporting of the year 939, Flodoard in his first entry for the year tells of William and Hugh the Great being attacked by King Louis IV.[4] We are also told that William had been excommunicated by the bishops because 'he had recently ravaged with raids and fire some *villae* belonging to Count Arnulf [of

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also supposedly gave his own daughter to William Longsword on the counsel of Hugh the Great. According to most historians this daughter was called Liégeard (Dudo does not mention the name, William of Jumièges gives the name but not any relationship to Herbert of Vermandois), who after William's murder in 942 supposedly later married Theobald the Trickster, count of Blois. This assembly in the forest of Lyons is usually placed in 935 because after this story Dudo tells of the return of Louis IV from England which we can date to 936 (cf. A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 398; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 145). Setting to one side whether this meeting ever actually took place (cf. E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 201, n. 254) and, if it did, its date, if this marriage of William Longsword happened it indicates that by the mid-930s King Rodulf's 933 grant to William Longsword was by now a thing of the past and of little import; William was supposedly now allied by marriage to Herbert, an arrangement Rodulf's grant of 933 had sought to avoid, but as P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 145, says regarding this marriage: 'À la veille de la mort de Raoul, Guillaume Longue Épée est reconnu par les grands du royaume comme l'un des leurs; jusqu'à sa mort, il intervient comme eux dans les soubresauts qui secouent le royaume.' Rodulf died in 936 allowing the return from England of Louis IV d'Outremer.

[1] É. Van Torhoudt thinks this push happened in 933 but was over by 936 when Alain Barbe-Torte returned.

[2] As mentioned earlier one of these battles in 937 was clearly that at Nantes, another, if it happened at all, was in the *pays de Leon* in the far north-west of Brittany (cf. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 390-91). Without much doubt the Seine Northmen were not involved in either of these encounters.

[3] Regarding the Northmen involved at Trans see É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 179; *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne', p. 612, who says: 'On ne sait rien des Normands vaincus à Trans. Formaient-ils un groupe de Vikings autonomes ? Étaient-ils des mercenaires, des alliés ou des fidèles de Guillaume Longue Épée qui s'était avancé jusque dans le secteur depuis 931 ?' With cause, Éric Van Torhoudt is perplexed here. He believes that the 'push west' of William Longsword happened in 933 not in 931, but he still seems to have some residual belief based on Dudo of Saint-Quentin that there really was a two-pronged repression of the Bretons in *c*.931 and afterwards, hence the question of whether in 939 the Northmen fighting at Trans were mercenaries, allies or *fidèles* of William Longsword. A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 396-98, argued that after their defeat at Nantes in 937 the remaining groups of Northmen still in Brittany assembled at Trans where they spent 938 constructing a camp before doing battle with the Bretons led by Juhel Berenger of Rennes with his allies Alan of Nantes and Hugh of Maine, and being defeated by them. He believes that the choice of Trans (in the north-east of the county of Rennes) for a camp might have been in the hope of getting support from the Seine Northmen (who he thinks were by now in the Avranchin and the Cotentin), however, if so, this did not happen because the Brittany Northmen 'ne furent pas d'ailleurs […] assistés par les Normands de la Seine' (p. 397).

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 939: *Annales*, p. 71; *Annals*, p. 31. P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, p. 36, n. 4, says: 'Ces deux seigneurs [William and Hugh] devraient avoir réuni leurs forces', and thus in late 938.

Flanders]'.[1] Thus it seems that in late 938, or at the very latest in very early 939, William Longsword's attention and activities were orientated to the north and east of the Seine, a direction of interest that he and his son Richard I would continue with for many years to come. A little later in 939 William's Northmen aided Herluin, the count of Montreuil and Ponthieu, to recapture the coastal *castellum* of Montreuil from Count Arnulf of Flanders who had just taken it.[2]

From the sources we have there seems not to have been the slightest interest in Brittany on the part of the Rouen Northmen,[3] and in fact Flodoard reports the last fights between Bretons and Northmen much later the same year, immediately after which at the very start of 940 we hear of William Longsword meeting with King Louis IV at Amiens and committing himself to the king.[4] We might reasonably conclude, therefore, that the fights in Brittany in 939 culminating perhaps at Trans had not involved William's men. His involvement in 937 is chronologically possible but it must be stressed there is no real evidence for it.

Finally, a coin found in a small hoard at Mont-Saint-Michel is often brought up by historians. The coin seems to bear the inscription: + VVILEIM DV + IRB +. Michael Dolley and Jacques Yvon thought 'the most likely reconstruction of the engraver's intent was': + VVILEIM DVX BRI, and hence it refers to William Longsword.[5] This is sometimes used as circumstantial evidence that William Longsword claimed some ducal right over Brittany, or even and much less likely that William had taken over some part of Brittany in the 930s.[6] A number of

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 939, *Annales*, p. 71; *Annals*, p. 31.

[2] *Ibid*. See also Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chaps. 11-15, pp. 186-97. For a thorough discussion of the siege of Montreuil in 939 see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 156-61. We are also told by Flodoard here (*ibid.*) that when Arnulf had taken Montreuil he captured Count Herluin's wife and children and sent them across the sea to King Æthelstan. Perhaps it was this event and exile that prompted Æthelstan soon afterwards to intervene, but interestingly not in favour of his relative Arnulf but to help his 'foster-son' Louis IV and his man Herluin. Flodoard (*ibid.*) says: 'The fleet of the English was sent by their king Aethelstan to assist King Louis, but when they crossed the sea, they plundered the coast of Flanders (*loca Morinorum mari contigua*). Without accomplishing their original mission, they went back across the sea from where they had come.' For an interesting discussion and interpretation of this abortive English assistance for Louis see S. McLean, 'Making a difference in tenth-century politics: King Athelstan's sisters', pp. 176-77.

[3] Of course, Dudo of Saint-Quentin would have it that William 'called to him the men of the Cotentin' to help him capture Montreuil, see Dudo: trans. Christiansen, p. 80. This is yet another example of where we should not consider Dudo as an historically reliable source. Although I cannot explore this question more here, for an analysis of this and related matters see in the first instance É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, pp. 48-52 and elsewhere.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 940: *Annales*, p. 75; *Annals*, p. 32.

[5] M. Dolley and J. Yvon, 'A Group of Tenth-Century Coins Found at Mont Saint-Michel', *British Numismatic Journal*, 40 (1971), pp. 1-16, at p. 7.

[6] See, for example, É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, p. 153; *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne', p. 610. P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 146, says that: 'Un denier trouvé au Mont-Saint-Michel et attribué au fils de Rollon suggère que Guillaume fit frapper monnaie à son nom comme duc des Bretons […] Pour autant, il est difficile de préciser dans quelle mesure l'autorité des comtes de Rouen s'exerçait effectivement sur la Normandie occidentale avant le règne de Richard Ier.' In my opinion the most likely answer to this question is 'none'.

observations are in order. First, the coin was probably minted at Rouen, quite definitely so according to the numismatist Jens Christian Moesgaard.[1] It might well have been struck soon after King Rodulf had granted 'Brittany' to William in 933, as a sort of boast or pretension following this grant. The fact that the moneyer bears the name RIVVALLON which could well be a Breton name cannot be used to argue that it was struck in Brittany. Finally, even if the coin was minted for William Longsword this cannot be used to imply that he had ever taken any control of Brittany. The 'duke William' coin was part of a small package buried 'before *c*.945 at the very latest' according to Dolley and Yvon.[2] The hoard mostly contained recently minted English coins, including three of king ANLAF/ONLAF of York who was probably Anlaf Sitricsson rather than his cousin Anlaf Guthfrithsson, again according to Dolley and Yvon. In terms of how it got to Mont Saint-Michel I suggest one plausible scenario is as follows: In 943 just months after William Longsword had been murdered on the Somme a pagan king called Setric arrived with a fleet on the Seine seeking to 'take over the whole area without a grant from the king' and to bring the young Richard and his Rouen Northmen back 'to the worship of idols, and to bring back pagan rites'. But this was not to be because Louis IV - who was still only in his early twenties - was quickly on the scene and engaged Setric and his *dux* Turmold in battle. Louis's mounted forces were victorious and both Setric and Turmold were killed.[3] I have discussed this mysterious pagan king Setric in depth in a published article and suggest that he and his men had in all likelihood come from York.[4] Then in 944, the year after Setric's death on or near the Seine, the reliable Flodoard tells us of another attack by Northmen on the region of Dol in north-eastern Brittany, immediately west of Mont Saint-Michel, in which the Bretons were massacred.[5] These Northmen had *recently* come from overseas (*nuper a transmarinis*), no

[1] In personal communication during a conference at Caen. Jens Christian Moesgaard is pursuing a project on *la monnaie normande* in the tenth century. Some of his latest conclusions are found in his as yet unpublished intervention 'Les vikings en France, le témoignage des monnaies', given at a *colloque* entitled *La monnaie aux Xe et XIe siècles: évolutions monétaires, évolutions politiques, évolutions économiques/ Coins and currency in the 10th and 11th centuries: issuing authorities, political powers, economic influences* organised by the École pratique des hautes études (EPHE) and *Le Studium* , Institute for Advanced Studies, Paris-Orléans, 8-12 October 2018. See also the numismatist Guillaume Sarah's intervention at the same conference 'La monnaie en Normandie au Xe siècle : bilan de la campagne d'analyse'. I was not present at this conference but Pierre Bauduin tells me that it was during a discussion of Thibault Cardon's paper 'Nouveaux éléments sur la monnaie en Bretagne aux Xe-XIe siècle. Monnaies de fouilles récentes de Rennes' that Moesgaard said : 'La monnaie de Guillaume Longue Epée comme Dux Brit « reste une énigme »', but that 'les analyses métallographiques suggèrent des ressemblances avec le stock de métal des monnaies normandes'. I thank Bauduin for these points.
[2] M. Dolley and J. Yvon, 'A Group of Tenth-Century Coins', p. 12.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 943: *Annales*, p. 88; *Annals*, p. 38; Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, c. 35, pp. 242-45.
[4] S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine: The mystery of the pagan king Setric'. See also J. C. Moesgaard and M. Gooch, 'Anglo-Viking Coins in France', in T. Abramson (ed.), *Studies in Early Medieval Coinage 3, Sifting the Evidence* (London, 2014), pp. 131-42.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 944: *Annales*, p. 94; *Annals*, p. 40.

doubt meaning from the British Isles and most likely from England.[1] The use of the word *nuper* here is highly significant because it suggests that the fleet involved had been somewhere else before it came to the area of Dol. Philippe Lauer reasonably suggested that they had first arrived in northern France in 943, that is that they were Setric and Turmold's force, but now obviously under a new leader.[2] Given the nature of the coins at Mont Saint-Michel and the historical context, Dolley and Yvon were led to say: 'We would not exclude the possibility that the insular coins [of Mont Saint-Michel] had been brought to Normandy by one or more of the followers of Thurmod and "Setric" in 943, and especially if it could be demonstrated that the "Setric" is the Sihtric presumptively expelled from York along with Anlaf in that year [943] when Regnald briefly occupied the Northumbrian capital.'[3]

King Setric definitely came from overseas, and most probably from York, his *dux* called Turmold might have come from there too but he and his men may have been 'renegade' Northmen from the lower Seine.[4] I will not discuss this more here. But after their deaths in 943 a possible scenario (amongst others) for the hiding of this small group of coins at Mont Saint-Michel, including the 'duke William' one, is that one Northman who had come with Sihtric/Setric from York to the Seine in 943, or even one of Turmold's men, had got possession of this 'duke William' coin during the incursion and raids on the Seine before Setric and Turmold were defeated and killed. The surviving Northmen then likely went to the Dol area in 944 and the hoard was buried in unknown circumstances at this time as both Lauer and Dolley and Yvon suggested.

Finally, after the defeat at Trans in 939 what became of the remaining Northmen who had been so plaguing Brittany and elsewhere for the previous twenty years?[5] We can only speculate. They had certainly suffered very significant losses over the last years at the hands of the Franks, the Bretons and the Aquitanians, and their strength was surely by now much diminished if not

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[1] As I have often remarked in this work and elsewhere the term *transmarinus* is used repeatedly in ninth- and tenth-century Frankish annals and invariably means the British Isles, usually, but perhaps not always, England.

[2] P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, pp. 117-18 and n. 4, 119. It is not without interest that after Anlaf Sihtricsson was expelled from York in (say) late 943 he does not appear back in Dublin until 945 (see *AU* 945.6 and 7). We do not know where he went in between. A. Woolf makes some conjectures: 'Amlaíb Cuarán', p. 38; *idem*, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 182-83.

[3] M. Dolley and J. Yvon, 'A Group of Tenth-Century Coins', p. 12.

[4] P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, p. 100, says: 'Un viking fraîchement descendu sur nos côtes, Setric, l'excitait sans doute à ces tentatives rétrogrades en faveur des rites païens. Louis dut bientôt en venir aux mains avec Setric et Turmod, pour défendre sa sûreté et soustraire à leur influence le jeune Richard.'

[5] It is not true to say as É. Van Torhoudt does (*Centralité et marginalité*, vol. 1, p. 180; *idem*, 'La résistance franco-bretonne', p. 612) that 'Les normands demeurèrent dans la région de Dol, grâce à des accords passées avec les princes Breton, jusqu'en 944 au moins', because as noted earlier the attack on and around Dol in 944 was conducted by Northmen recently come from 'overseas' (from England in fact but via the Seine) and not by some who had remained in Brittany after 939. The idea of *des accords* with the Breton princes is just imagination.

totally eradicated. Some of those who were left may have stayed in Cornouaille, one such possibility is suggested by J. Quaghebeur.[1] Other small groups might have dispersed, possibly even to join others in the Ireland or England where from 939 to the early the 940s Dublin-based Northmen were occupied with retaking York before being expelled by King Edmund in 943-944, whilst in Ireland itself there were still many raiding opportunities. Another possibility is that some of those remaining after 939 had established a raiding base or two on the Cotentin peninsula where many 'Scandinavian' place-names are to be found, although in my view these names are more likely to have originated at the earliest in the 960s. But even if they had done so it seems rather strange that they then opted for a settled non-raiding life because with the exception of the attack around Dol in 944, which as noted likely originated in Northumbria (via the Seine), there were no further attacks in Brittany or along the Loire until the late 950s, attacks which are the subject of the next chapter.

[1] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 207, n. 197; *eadem*, 'Puissance publique, puissances privées sur les côtes du comté de Vannes (IXe-XIIe siècle)', in G. Le Bouëdec and F. Chappé (eds.), *Pouvoirs et littoraux du XVe-XXe siècle* (Rennes, 2000), pp. 11-28, at p. 17 and after.

Chapter 14

BRITTANY AND NANTES IN THE LATE 950s

The Oxford historian Eric Christiansen pointed out: 'There is some evidence of a Norman raid on Brittany in 952/60, but not necessarily from Rouen.'[1] This matter is the subject of this chapter.

It could be said that such an event does not directly concern Aquitaine, but Nantes on the lower Loire is included in our wide definition of Aquitaine and is thus very relevant to our exploration of the connections of the Northmen in Aquitaine. In addition, as suggested by Christiansen's comment above, these attacks are often linked with the Rouen Northmen of Richard I and thereby with Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story of a supposed 'Norman War' in the early 960s and a subsequent departure of some Northmen from the Seine in *c*.965, who then apparently went to Spain, a subject which will be explored more in Chapter 15.

Trying not to run ahead of ourselves, let us start with what we really know. After the Bretons' expulsion of the Northmen from Brittany in 939 with one exception they were not to return until sometime in the late 950s. This in no way means that there were no Northmen in France or indeed in the Low Countries during this period. The Northmen of Rouen were still very present both under Rollo's son William Longsword and, following his murder on the banks of the river Somme in late 942, during the early and difficult years of his young son Richard I. There were also other groups of Northmen operating in northern Francia and the Low Countries during these years. What seems clear is that with the exception of an attack on the Breton district of Dol in 944[2] there seem to have been no Scandinavian attacks on the Armorican peninsula nor more certainly on the Loire or in Aquitaine south of the Loire for nearly two decades. Then suddenly in the late 950s the coasts of Brittany suffered a new wave of Scandinavian raids culminating in a major attack on the city of Nantes. What actually happened? Who were these Northmen? And where had they appeared from?

For more than a hundred years historians have placed these raids at the door of the young Richard I of Normandy, or alternatively have the attacks being undertaken by some unidentified group of mercenary Northmen acting on Richard's account. These attacks have also invariably been linked with the purported 'Norman War' between Richard and, among others, Theobald

[1] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 218, n. 400.
[2] This was discussed a little above and in S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine'. See also P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, Appendice IV, 'Sur une prétendue prise de Nantes par les Normands en 944', pp. 285-87.

the Trickster count of Blois.[1] This was a struggle in which the fighting parts took place according to the usual dating between 961 and 962 and which was resolved somewhat later when, according to Dudo of Saint-Quentin, many of these Northmen were finally induced to leave Francia for Spain.[2]

After having presented all the available source evidence for these attacks and their chronology our attention will be turned to any possible connection there might have been with the so-called Norman War. It will be argued that most, possibly all, of Dudo of Saint-Quentin's long tale of this 'war' is not history at all but is a novel-like amalgam cobbled together from real events at different periods in order to show Richard I in a heroic light and as the centre of events. There is no support for the theory that this 'war' had anything to do with the Scandinavian attacks on coastal Brittany and Nantes. Next, we will explore the question of where the Northmen responsible for these raids might have come from and gone to. The most likely original origin is the British Isles, in particular Scandinavian York, although they might also be linked to the Cotentin. One theory which might be suggested is that the Northmen the canon of Saint-Quentin says were called in to help Richard I in the early 960s could have been those who had recently made the attacks on Brittany. If such 'auxiliaries' did in fact come to northern Neustria then this is possible. Finally, after having considered Hugh of Fleury's 'evidence' about *Alani* and *Deiri* being amongst these auxiliaries it will be suggested that maybe no such Northmen ever came to Richard's aid in the early 960s.

Attacks on Brittany and Nantes

Let us start with what we can actually know about the attack on Nantes and the pillaging along the coasts of Brittany which had immediately preceded it. Here we are reliant on one lone source: the *Chronicle of Nantes* and the associated *Miracles of the Church of Nantes*. No other contemporary or even later annals or chronicles say a single word about these events, neither Dudo of Saint-Quentin nor the reliable Flodoard of Reims nor even the later historians Richer of Reims, Ralph Glaber and Hugh of Fleury.

The *Chronicle of Nantes* starts by telling us that: 'Porro Normanni, piratici et diabolici viri, morte Alani audita, redientes Britanniam coeperunt depraedari et venerunt usque ad civitatem

[1] For Theobald the Trickster see Y. Sassier, 'Thibaud le Tricheur et Hugues le Grand', in O. Guillot and R. Favreau (eds.), *Pays de Loire et Aquitaine de Robert le Fort aux premiers Capétiens : actes du colloque scientifique international tenu à Angers en septembre 1997* (Poitiers, 1997), pp. 145-57; F. Lesueur, *Thibaud le Tricheur, comte de Blois, de Tours et de Chartres au Xe siècle* (Blois, 1963).
[2] Their departure is usually dated to the summer of 965 as we shall see.

Namnetensem.'[1] After hearing of the death of Alan Barbe-Torte (in 952), the Northmen (*Normanni*), piratical and diabolical men, started to plunder Brittany once again and then they came to the town of Nantes. The *Chronicle* continues by telling how the Northmen captured the bishop of Nantes called Walter (*Walterus*),[2] along with many other citizens, and then they tried to take the fortified enclosure (*castrum*) that Alan had built around the cathedral.[3]

Being very afraid, the people of Nantes sent an urgent appeal to their new count Fulk II 'the Good' of Anjou asking that he come to their rescue. Fulk replied that he would come soon. Knowing of her husband's timidity and his propensity to do nothing Fulk's wife encouraged him to act.[4] In order to shake him out of his inertia she even told him that she had heard that a *palus magnus* (a large stake or pile) which was fixed in the mouth of the Loire had fallen, causing great fear among the Northmen.[5] Fulk, however, did not come, and after being besieged for eight days with no sign of relief the people of Nantes made a *sortie* from their *castrum* and managed to defeat the Northmen and chase them away. The fleeing Northmen took Bishop Walter and their other captives with them to the 'New Breton' peninsula of Guérande and it was only when the Northmen had been paid a large ransom that Walter and the others were released.[6] A slightly different version of these events is given by the so-called *Miracles of the Church of Nantes* (*Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*), which René Merlet argued very convincingly was probably written by the compiler of the *Chronicle of Nantes* himself. It adds extra detail and includes the inevitable miracle that saved Nantes from further depredation.[7] The *Miracles* say that since the death of the *dux* of Brittany (Alan d. 952) and during the first years (*primo tempore*) of the reign of King Lothar III (r. 954-986), the son of Louis IV d'Outremer (d. 954), the Northmen had been constantly plundering and looting along the coasts of western Gaul. They then sailed into the estuary of the Loire and made a surprise attack on Nantes.[8] Entering the town (*urbe*), they captured Bishop Walter and many others. The

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[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 38, p. 111.
[2] *Ibid*. *Walterus* is usually called Gautier or Gaultier in French.
[3] Alan had built this *castrum* in 939/40 after he had defeated the Northmen of Nantes; see *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 30, pp. 92-23.
[4] Fulk's wife at the time was Alan Barbe-Torte's widow, the sister of Theobald of Blois. See *La chronique de Nante*s, ed. Merlet, chap. 27, p. 107, a connection that will be discussed later.
[5] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 38, p. 112.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*, in *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, pp. 143-48. The name *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis* was coined by Merlet for four chapters inserted into the *Chronicle of Saint-Brieuc* (*ibid*., p. 143, nn. 1 and 2).
[8] *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*, in *La chronique de Nantes,* ed. Merlet, pp. 143-44: 'Quum primo tempore Lotharii regis, filii Ludovici Transmarini, patrias et regiones occidentales Galliae prope maritima consistentes, mortuo pro tunc duce Britonum., depraedationibus assiduis devastarent, ipsi equidem, per alveum Ligeris cum magna classe navigii advecti, urbem Namnetieam ex improvise ingrediuntur.'

inhabitants of Nantes were quite understandably very scared and fled to the safety of their protected cathedral of the Saints Donatian and Rogatian,[1] pleading and praying for assistance from their holy saints. Thereafter, the Northmen surrounded them on all sides and made free to devastate the surrounding area with impunity. But the Northmen then went back to their ships with their captives, including Bishop Walter, and sailed to Guérande from where the captives were released, but again only after a large ransom had been paid.[2] There is no mention here of the people of Nantes making a sortie and forcing the flight of the Northmen as there is in the *Chronicle of Nantes*. However, the *Miracles* then go on to recount how the Northmen returned to Nantes for a second attack. Whether this was after or before Bishop Walter had been ransomed and released is not clear. After devastating the surrounding area this time one group of the Northmen managed to get into the cathedral with their hostages in tow. While they were preparing to despoil the sanctuary of all its riches God manifested his anger and rage and miraculously deprived the Northmen of their sight.[3] Blind and repentant the Northmen abandoned the city as soon as they had regained their sight. The *Miracles* say that the Northmen were so in awe of this miraculous punishment and that they gained such a salutary respect for the church of the holy martyrs of Nantes - that is the saintly brothers Donatian and Rogatian - that they spread the word throughout all the regions of the Northmen (*per omnem regionem Normannorum*).[4] This is all we really know of these attacks on Brittany and Nantes with any degree of certainty. Anything other than this must lie in the field of contextual and chronological interpretation, and sometimes even circumstantial conjecture.

The dating of the attacks

The first question that needs to be addressed is this: When did the attack on Nantes take place? And implicitly also when did the raids on the coasts of Brittany that preceded it happen? The *Chronicle of Nantes* and the *Miracles of the Church of Nantes* provide a number of important clues.

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[1] *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*, in *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, p. 144. The cathedral of Saint-Donatian and Saint-Rogatian was named after two brothers martyred in Nantes during the reign of Roman emperor Maximian, in about 304, for refusing to deny their faith. They are sometimes referred to as *les enfants nantais*.
[2] *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*, in *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, pp. 144-45.
[3] This temporary blindness reminds us of the miracle at the siege of Tours in 903 as told by Bishop Radbod of Utrecht in the early tenth century, and of the miracle that saved Charles the Simple from Rollo at Chartres in 911 according to Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges (as also told by William of Malmesbury, John of Worcester, the *Annals of Saint-Neots* and Robert Wace - involving blindness). Space does not permit a fuller analysis of the undoubted parallels here.
[4] *Miracula Ecclesiae Namnetensis*, in *La chronique de Nantes,* ed. Merlet, p. 146.

As has just been noted, the *Chronicle of Nantes* reports that it was after the death of Alan that the Northmen once again began to ravage Brittany after which they came to Nantes. This places these raids after 952. According to the *Miracles of the Church of Nantes* it was after Alan's death and in the first years of the reign of Lothar III when the Northmen were raiding along the coasts of western Gaul before arriving at Nantes. Lothar succeeded his father Louis IV on the latter's death in September 954. He was crowned not long after at the monastery of Saint-Remi by Archbishop Artold of Reims.[1] This testimony places these events in the years immediately following 954-955. Lothar was only thirteen when his father died. His mother Gerberga acted as regent although only with the agreement of Hugh the Great.[2] However, it was only when Hugh was nearing death, and then following his death in late 956, that Lothar who had now reached his majority started to act in his capacity of 'king'.[3] If the *Miracles* are referring to the first years of Lothar's active reign rather than his succession or coronation it could mean that the *Normanni* were attacking Brittany in the last years of the 950s, which is not contradictory as we would still be looking at the later 950s.

A second little clue is that both the *Chronicle of Nantes* and the *Miracles of the Church of Nantes* report that Walter was the bishop of Nantes and that he was captured and subsequently ransomed by the Northmen. The same *Chronicle* says that Duke Alan had made Walter, the son of the archbishop of Dol Wicohen, bishop of Nantes when the previous bishop Hesdren had abandoned his diocese and returned to Saint-Pol-de-Léon where he had first been ordained.[4] Hesdren was still bishop of Nantes in 958 and René Merlet argued that Walter 'was elected bishop of Nantes between 958 and 960'.[5] Merlet's date of 960 is due to him already placing the attack on Nantes in that year but his general interval might be accepted.

A third clue which provides some help with the question of chronology is that the *Chronicle of Nantes* says that the people of Nantes had appealed to Fulk, the count of Anjou, to come to their aid. Fulk was thus still alive when Nantes was attacked. When did Fulk die? According to the Nantes chronicler when Alan Barbe-Torte was dying in 952 he was concerned about the rights and the succession of his infant son Drogo,[6] born of his second wife, an unnamed sister

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 954: *Annales*, p. 139; *Annals*, p. 60.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 956-957: *Annales*, pp. 142-43; *Annals*, pp. 61-62.
[4] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 35, pp. 103-4.
[5] R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 104, n. 1, my translation.
[6] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 36, p. 105. That Drogo was an infant at this time can be seen from the references to him as such in the *Chronicle of Nantes*, see *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 36, p. 105, where he is called *ut filio sua parvulo*, and chap. 37, pp. 108 and 109 where he is called an *infans* and then a *puer*. Drogo was probably born in about 950; see J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 99. If we are to believe the chronicler of Nantes (cf. chap. 36, p. 106) Drogo was the last surviving child of Alan and his second wife, implying that he had had other children with her but that they had died when very young.

of Theobald of Blois.[1] Alan had two older surviving sons by his first wife, called Hoel and Guerech.[2] The *Chronicle of Nantes* says the mother of Hoel and Guerech was called Judith and that she was a 'noble mother' (*nobili matre*).[3] But late in life Alan had decided to abandon his allegiance to the Carolingian king Louis IV to whom he had possibly sworn fealty in 942 and marry the sister of the Robertian Theobald the Trickster, count of Blois, a sister whose name we do not know.[4]

When he knew that he was dying Alan asked his brother-in-law Theobald to come to visit him. Other important bishops and counts from all over Brittany were asked to attend him as well. When they had assembled Alan ordered them all to swear an oath of fealty to his infant son Drogo and to his brother-in-law Theobald, who was of course Drogo's uncle.[5] Theobald was given the guardianship of Drogo until the boy reached maturity at the age of fifteen. Alan then committed all he had to Theobald for him to hold in trust until Drogo came of age. He made Theobald swear an oath to this effect. Alan died soon thereafter and was buried in the cathedral of the saintly martyrs Donatian and Rogatian at Nantes.[6] According to the *Chronicle of Nantes* shortly after Alan's death his widow (Theobald's sister) was given in marriage to Fulk II Count of Anjou. Theobald made Fulk Drogo's guardian until the boy reached adulthood at the age of fifteen. Fulk was also given in trust half of the city of Nantes and its territories,

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[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 34, pp. 102-3.

[2] I prefer to follow J. Quaghebeur and use the more Breton names as we find them in the sources rather than French versions such as Hoël and Guérech.

[3] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 39, p. 113. Why Merlet (*ibid*., p. 112, n. 3) says that the boys were *bâtards* is a mystery, at least to me. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 98, follows the same line. She says that Drogo 'portait en lui tous les espoirs du lignage breton, puisqu'il en était l'héritier légitime. Auparvant, Alain avait eu deux fils, Hoel et Guerech, nés d'une union avec une femme noble, Judith, mais avec qui il n'avait pas contracté marriage légitime. Ces bâtards furent, par la naissance de Drogon, écartés de toute revendication sur le duché'. Quaghebeur twice repeats her view of the 'illegitimacy' and bastardy of Hoel and Guerech, and of the sole legitimacy of Drogo (*ibid*, p. 103; p. 281, n. 59). There is, however, no evidence that Alan was not legitimately married with Judith and thus that her two sons were bastards - it is just an assumption. Elsewhere Quaghebeur (*ibid*., p. 62) says this about names: 'Le seul indice permettant de retrouver l'origine d'une femme est bien souvent l'examen des *nomina* qu'elle a apportés dans la maison de son époux […]'. The obviously Frankish royal name of Judith and the English links of the name are ripe for more consideration. Alan was after all at King Æthelstan's court for most of his early years. The interpretation of the fact that Hoel and Guerech were pushed aside by their father Alan before he died in 952 perhaps more reflects the *realpolitik* of the time. Alan had recently married Theobald of Blois's sister and Theobald had made sure that at the time Alan was dying he gave preference to his own nephew Drogo over his (Theobald's) two new older stepsons.

[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 942: *Annales*, pp. 84-85; *Annales*, p. 36; *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 34, pp. 102-3. For the chronicler of Nantes' rather legendary version of the circumstances that led to Alan's switch of allegiance to the Robertians see *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chaps. 33 and 34, pp. 97-102. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 83, summarises her view as follows, 'Le mariage contracté à la fin de sa vie, avec une sœur de Thibaud le Tricheur, illustra bien cette politique [of Alan integrating himself into the the Frankish nobility]. Par cette union, Alain semble avoir voulu délaisser des fidélités anciennes pratiquées par sa race à l'encontre des Carolingiens. En s'alliant matrimonialement à un lignage dévoué au nouveau pouvoir, il se rapprochait implicitement des Robertiens, la puissance montante du royaume'.

[5] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 36, pp. 105-6.

[6] *Ibid*., chap. 36, pp. 105-7. J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, pp. 96-100, argues that both Alan and Drogo were, at least eventually, buried at the abbey of Landévennec.

plus the tribute of its *portus* and all revenues from the town, and in general half of all Brittany.[1] Fulk took his new wife and her infant child Drogo to Angers. Once there Fulk immediately sent some of his men to Nantes to take the affairs of the city in hand and bring back to Angers what he had been promised (that is moveable wealth). When he saw the riches that subsequently arrived Fulk was amazed and said to his assistants that there was no man as rich and powerful in the whole of the kingdom of Franks as he who possessed Nantes. The thought occurred to him that if Drogo was dead then he, Fulk, could have the city of Nantes for himself. He thus pressured and intimidated the child's wet nurse to murder him, which she finally did.[2] Although we might not care to believe all the romanesque and machiavellian details of the murder plot and its execution we should perhaps admit Fulk's guilt. Quaghebeur asserts that, 'Cet assassinat de l'héritier breton par le comte d'Anjou est admis ; il est indéniable que la disparition de Drogon permettait, en théorie, à l'Anjou de mettre la main sur la Nantais'.[3] When had the murder, or just the death, of Drogo taken place? Merlet places it in 'about' 958 and he adds that: 'Cette mort de l'héritier légitime de la Bretagne fut la cause première d'une lutte longue et sanglante entre les Normands et les Bretons.'[4] It will be shown later that no such connection and causality existed. When we examine the story of the murder and its chronology as told by the chronicler of Nantes, and even if we discard the dramatic intrigue and plot, that Drogo was murdered/died as a very young boy (an *infans* and a *puer*) (in his bath by his wet nurse?) is clear. I would place his death in *circa* 954-955, Quaghebeur suggests 'vers 956'.[5] In any case Fulk was thus certainly alive at this time.

Some final and rather important information emanating from the Nantes chronicle is what it has to say about Alan's sons Hoel and Guerech. In chapter 39 we are told that sometime after Drogo's death the people of Nantes dismissed/sent away (*dimittentes*) Fulk of Anjou and turned to Hoel and Guerech, two noble young men (*nobiles juvenes*) who were the sons of Alan and Judith born before Alan had married Theobald's sister. We are further told that after Alan's death in 952 Guerech had been brought up (*nutritus*) by the monks of the abbey of Saint-Benoit-

[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 36, p. 108. It is possible that Fulk had paid Theobald a stiff price for these concessions, see D. Piel, *Le pouvoir de Foulque II le Bon, comte d'Anjou de 941 à 960 : étude sur la puissance angevine au milieu du Xe siècle*, unpublished Master's dissertation (University of Angers, 2010), pp. 62-64.
[2] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 37, pp. 109-11.
[3] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 98. For the same opinion see O. Guillot, *Le comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XIe siècle*, 2 vols (Paris, 1972), vol 1, p. 10, n. 49; F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens, Lothaire, Louis V., Charles de Lorraine (954-991)* (Paris, 1891), p. 347. R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 110, n. 1, thought Fulk's guilt is 'hardly admissable' because Fulk could have gained no advantage from murdering Drogo, an opinion followed by D. Piel, *Le pouvoir de Foulque II le Bon,* pp. 66-67.
[4] R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, pp. 110-1, n. 1.
[5] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, tab. 3, p. 104.

sur-Loire at Fleury near Orléans, while Hoel had been brought up (*nutritus*) with his mother (Judith) and with his other relations.[1] Unfortunately we are not told where Judith was living. It is also said that later, when Hoel had 'become an adult', he took dominion over the Breton principality and as a valiant count fought many times against Conan, the count of Rennes and the son of Juhel Bérenger, who had held a part of Theobald of Blois's Breton territory (the county of Rennes) which had been granted to him on Alan's death. Hoel demanded that Conan recognise his rights inherited from his father Alan and not the rights of Theobald of Blois. Conan, however, resisted Hoel and in retaliation Hoel devastated all of the territory of Rennes right up to the walls of the town.[2] This fight between Conan and Hoel took place in the 970s, around 975 according to Merlet.[3] If we are to believe the information about Hoel and Guerech's upbringing we can perhaps infer two things.

First, it seems that Judith had not died before Alan remarried but had been cast aside. Second, both Hoel and Guerech seem still to have been minors when their father died which would suggest they were both born in Brittany after Alan's return from England in 936. One other question of interest is when did Hoel take control of Nantes? At some time after 952 but before 957 Fulk of Anjou confirmed an earlier act of donation made by duke Alan Barbe-Torte to the Breton abbey of Landévennec. This is recorded in the abbey's cartulary.[4] The confirmation most likely happened soon after Drogo's death.[5] Quaghebeur says: 'La disparition au dernier héritier légitime au pouvoir Breton sanctionnait la mainmise de ses deux tuteurs sur la Bretagne et la répartition des territoires qui avait été faite.'[6]

One interesting feature of the act is that it was also signed by Hoel who is qualified as *comes*. We can only presume that Hoel was count of Nantes, which suggests that his takeover at Nantes as reported in the *Chronicle of Nantes* had occurred in the mid-950s, perhaps when he had reached maturity (come of age) at the age of fifteen? Furthermore, in September 958 an assembly of noble Franks and Bretons took place at Verron, at the border between Anjou and the Touraine ('Placitus fieret in confinio Andegavorum Turonorumque in Verrone videlicet').[7]

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[1] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 39, p. 113.
[2] *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, chap. 39, pp. 112-14.
[3] R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 114, n. 2. Chapters 39-45 (at pp. 112-34) of the *Chronicle of Nantes* tell at great length (and in somewhat legendary fashion) of what became of Hoel and Guerech and their own sons throughout the rest of the tenth century. These interesting times are unfortunately outside our area of interest here.
[4] *Cartulaire de Landévennec*, eds. R.-F. Le Man and E. Ernault, pp. 562-64, act no. 25. For the dating see J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 98 and n. 415.
[5] J. Quaghebeur, *La Cornouaille*, p. 98.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] See H. Guillotel, *Les Actes des ducs de Bretagne (944-1148)*, act no. 3, pp. 13-16; P. H. Morice, *Mémoires pour servir de preuves à l'histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Bretagne*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1742), col. 346-47. Verron is situated between Tours and Angers.

This assembly was attended by the lords of Anjou, Tours and the Bretons, and was in part concerned with the administration of Brittany. The assembled nobles were led by counts Fulk of Angers, Theobald of Blois and Berenger of Rennes, but also included various other lay nobles and bishops (including Bishop Hesdren of Nantes). They subscribed to a charter in favour of the abbey of Saint-Florent at Saumur granting it exemption from paying tolls along the Loire.[1] But a count Hoel (*Hoiellaguni Comitis*) also signed the charter. So yet again presuming that Hoel was the count of Nantes he was possibly still subservient to Count Fulk,[2] who the chronicler of Nantes says the people of Nantes appealed to when the Northmen attacked the city. The act proves that Fulk was still alive and active in 958 which will be of significance later.

Noël-Yves Tonnerre suggests that it was Hoel taking 'le gouvernement du comté nantais [...] qui, en 960, repoussa une dernière fois une attaque normande sur Nantes'.[3] It might indeed be true that Hoel was at Nantes when the Scandinavians attacked, in 960 or somewhat before, and that Hoel and the citizens of Nantes had appealed to their overlord Fulk for help but he had not come, although why the Nantes chronicler did not mention Hoel at this time is somewhat inexplicable.[4] However, one thing that certainly should not be assumed or inferred is that the assembly of 958 had anything to do with the later attack by some Northmen on Nantes. Merlet believed this assembly recognised the supremacy of Theobald and Fulk and that it was held 'par la nécessité d'empêcher les Normands de s'emparer encore une fois de la Bretagne'.[5] Is this just wishful thinking? As will be shown later, Merlet was keen (to say the very least) to suggest that the attacks on coastal Brittany and on Nantes, and the outbreak of the so-called Norman War between Theobald of Blois and Richard I of Rouen, all happened in 960. If so, then how could the assembly in 958 at Verron conceivably be anticipating these future attacks? It has already been suggested, and will be suggested again, that the attacks on coastal Brittany,

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[1] J.-P. Brunterc'h says that the exemption was made with the 'accord' of 'Thibaud pour la Loire tourangelle et blésoise, de Foulques pour la Loire angevin et de chacun d'eux pour la Loire nantaise': see J.-P. Brunterc'h, *Puissance temporelle et pouvoir diocésain des évêques de Nantes entre 936 et 1049, Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 61 (1984), pp. 29-82, at pp. 47-48. This would seem to imply that 'count Hoel' was subservient to the two Frankish 'princes' Fulk and Theobald, who Brunterc'h (*ibid*, p. 47) says had jointly governed the Nantaise since Alan Barbe-Torte's death in 952.

[2] See previous note.

[3] N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, p. 289.

[4] It has often been remarked that the chronicler of Nantes was very hostile towards Fulk of Anjou, but he was equally and repeatedly laudatory towards Hoel and Guerech.

[5] R. Merlet, 'Les origines du monastère de Saint-Magloire de Paris', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 56 (1895), pp. 237-73, at p. 263. D. Piel, *Le pouvoir de Foulque II le Bon*, p. 65, follows Merlet's lead and says: 'En effet, les deux comtes préparent ensemble leur collaboration avec le roi carolingien Lothaire dans sa guerre contre Richard, duc de Normandie', which is strange because in 958 this 'war' had not yet started according to Merlet and others.

which certainly occurred before the attack on Nantes happened, took place in the second half of the 950s and not in 960. Given this chronology it is conceivable that the Frankish and Breton magnates assembled at Verron might have feared an attack on Nantes but there is no hint of this in the charter of 958 which rather seems to suggest 'business as usual'.

The traditions of Tours and Angers

The next chronological evidence for the date of Fulk's death, and hence the date of the attack on Nantes, comes from the Tours and Angers traditions.

The *Great Chronicle of Tours* (*Chronicon Turonense Magnum*) says that in the 21st year of Otto and the second year of Lothar Fulk of Anjou came to the feast of Saint-Martin at Tours. When approaching the town, he met a horrible leper at the port of Cordon (*in portu de Cordum*) on the river Cher. The leper begs the count to help him cross the river to get to the church of Saint-Martin in Tours. Fulk carries the leper across the river and leaves him at the door of the church. The leper then disappears and is seen no more. But the following night Saint Martin appears to the count and tells him that the leper had been Jesus Christ and that for his good deed Fulk deserves the joys of heaven. The next day, having heard mass and taken the Eucharist, Fulk gave up his spirit in the church in the eighteenth year of his comital power (*anno comitatis XVIIIe*).[1] Although the *Great Chronicle of Tours* clearly brings together in time the miracle of Saint Martin of Tours involving the leper and Fulk II's death the next day at Tours there can be no doubt that these two events (even putting to one side the miraculous elements) happened at different times. That this is so is first suggested by the fact that Fulk is said to have been coming to the festival of Saint Martin (on 11 November) during the 21st year of King Otto and the second year of King Lothar. If we take Otto's reign as starting from his coronation at Aachen on 7 August 936 (his father Henry the Fowler died on 2 July),[2] his 21st year would suggest a dating for the miracle of Saint Martin at Tours of late in 956 or in 957. Similarly, if we count Lothar's reign from the death of his father Louis IV on 10 September 954, or from his coronation shortly thereafter in the same year,[3] the second year of Lothar's reign would place us in late 955 or, perhaps more likely, in 956. Next, Fulk II's father, called Fulk the Red, probably died either at the end of 941 or the very beginning of 942.[4] But according to the same

[1] *Chronicon Turonense Magnum*, in *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. Salmon, p. 114.
[2] T. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages 800-1056* (Harlow, 1991), p. 148.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 954: *Annales*, p. 139; *Annals*, p. 60.
[4] K. F. Werner, 'Les premiers Robertiens et les premiers Anjou (IXe siècle - début Xe siècle', in O. Guillot and R. Favreau (eds.), *Pays de Loire et Aquitaine de Robert le Fort aux premiers Capétiens : actes du colloque scientifique international tenu à Angers en septembre 1997* (Poitiers, 1997), pp. 9-67, at p. 67; L. Halphen, *Le*

source Fulk II died in the eighteenth year of his comital power which would indicate a date for his death from the end of 958 to 959. Indeed, the *Abbreviated Chronicle of Tours* (so named by André Salmon as the *Chronicon Turonense Abbreviatium*), which was written at roughly the same time as the *Great Chronicle* and is as its given name implies a shorter version of the latter, says explicitly that Fulk died in 958 (*DCCCCLVIII. Fulco Bonus comes Andegavensium obit*) and that his son Geoffrey Greymantle succeeded him (*cui Gaufridus Grisa Tunica filius ejus succedit*).[1] Some caution needs to be expressed regarding from which dates the chronicler of Tours might have counted the reigns of Otto and Lothar. As was noted earlier, Lothar was only thirteen when his father Louis IV died in 954, and until the death of Hugh the Great in 956 he was very much under the influence of the *dux Francorum*. If we were to count Lothar's effective reign from when he achieved his majority at the age of fifteen this would suggest that we might date his effective reign from, say, late 956, which is when in fact we hear of him acting in his own right for the first time in Flodoard's *Annals*.[2] As Yves Sassier says: 'Il semble [...] que dès 957, le jeune Lothaire, âgé de seize ans, agisse en roi majeur.'[3] This would place the miracle involving the leper and Saint Martin in late 957 or 958. Additionally, the *Abbreviated Chronicle of Tours* actually states elsewhere that Louis IV died in 957 and was succeeded by his son Lothar,[4] which although it is not true clearly indicates that this is when the Tours tradition placed Louis's death, and as a corollary that Fulk II's death following the miracle of the leper in Lothar's second year happened in 958 or 959. It is a similar case with Ottos's reign. Both the *Great* and the *Abbreviated Chronicle of Tours* explicitly say that Otto became king in 938.[5] This would again indicate that in the Tours tradition the death of Fulk II, in the 21st year of Otto, was seen as having taken place in late 958 or 959.

We must also consider the evidence from the *Deeds of the Counts of Anjou* (*Gesta consulum Andegavorum*),[6] which were compiled in the mid-twelfth century, over half a century before both the *Great* and the *Abbreviated* chronicles of Tours.[7] As the *Deeds*' editors Louis Halphen and René Poupardin observed, the compiler/author of the *Deeds of the Counts of Anjou* knew

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comté d'Anjou au XIe siècle (Paris, 1906), p. 4 and n. 4; É. Mabille in *Introduction* to *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. P. A. Marchegay and A. Salmon (Paris, 1856), p. LXIII.

[1] *Chronicon Turonense Abbreviatium,* in *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. Salmon p. 185.

[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 956: *Annales*, pp. 142-43; *Annals*, p. 62.

[3] Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, p. 142.

[4] *Chronicon Turonense Abbreviatium,* in *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. Salmon, p. 185: 'DCCCCLVII. Ludovicus Transmarinus rex Franciae obit, cui Lotharius filius jus succedit.'

[5] *Chronicon Turonense Magnum* and *Chronicon Turonense Abbreviatium*, in *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. Salmon pp. 111, 185. Otto actually became king in August 936; see T. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 148.

[6] *Gesta consulum Andegavorum,* in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, pp. 25-73.

[7] L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, p. XL, suggest a date of composition of 1164 or earlier.

none of the historical texts composed in Anjou and seems to have got his information mostly from Tours.[1] Indeed Halphen and Poupardin assert that many passages were visibly taken from Saint-Martin of Tours itself.[2] Of most relevance is that 'Breton of Amboise', the copier/redactor of an early manuscript of the *Deeds*, probably borrowed two legends about Fulk II the Good from a book of miracles composed at Saint-Martin of Tours.[3] One is an amusing story of how King Louis d'Outremer came one day to a festival of Saint-Martin at Tours. Seeing Fulk the Good, count of Angers, singing with the canons in the church of Saint-Martin, Louis mocks him. Having seen this Count Fulk sent a missive to the king saying that an illiterate king was a crowned donkey, a story also told later in the *Great Chronicle of Tours*.[4] The other is the story of Fulk carrying Jesus Christ, in the form of a leper, from *Port-Cordon* on the river Cher (Port Évardon)[5] to the nearby church of Saint-Martin of Tours, which has already been discussed above.[6] The *Deeds* say that when Fulk was out riding with a group of his nobles to maintain peace and justice in his lands they crossed the Loire at the 'port de la Pile' (*per Portum Pile*)[7] and arrived at the 'port de Corden' (*ad Portum Curdonis*) where they met the leper. Fulk then carried the leper two leagues on his shoulders to the church of Saint-Martin at Tours.[8]

Of greater significance for our purposes is that unlike the *Great Chronicle of Tours* the *Deeds of the Counts of Anjou* do not have Fulk arriving at Tours for the festival of Saint Martin, let alone dying at Tours the day after carrying the leper on his shoulders. The *Deeds* state that it was at a later date that Fulk died, in fact whilst he was receiving holy communion from the hands of the bishop of Tours on the day of the festival of Saint Martin - therefore on 11 November.[9] The date of 11th of November for Fulk II's death also seems to be a little suspicious. According to Denis Piel: 'Cette date de décès pose de même problème quand on pense à la « coïncidence divine » pour Foulque II de mourir le jour de la fête hivernale du saint qu'il vénère le plus.'[10] Putting all this evidence together it is most likely that what happened (if

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[1] *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, p. XXXIII.
[2] *Ibid*., p. XXXIII and n. 5.
[3] *Ibid*., p. XXXVIII.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 140; *Chronicon Turonense Magnum*, in *Chroniques de Touraine*, ed. A. Salmon, p. 113. P. Bauduin says (pers. comm) : 'Un roi illettré est un âne couronné, c'est un thème développé au XIIe siècle par Jean de Salisbury (*Policraticus*), donc il est possible que le contenu de cette lettre de Foulques soit influencé par une tradition bien postérieure.'
[5] Commune of La Riche, cant. Ballan-Miré, dep. Indre-et-Loire.
[6] For both stories see *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, pp. 140-42; *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. P. A. Marchegay and A. Salmon, pp. 70-72.
[7] Commune of Cinq-Mars-La-Pile, dep. Indre-et-Loire
[8] A very good French translation of this story (and others) can be found in D. Piel, *Le pouvoir de Foulque II le Bon,* pp. 79-80.
[9] *Gesta consulum Andegavorum,* in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, p. 37.
[10] D. Piel, *Le pouvoir de Foulque II le Bon*, p. 39, n. 29.

it did at all) is that Fulk's visit to Tours when he met the leper took place sometime before his death, perhaps in 958 or even before that. The two were separate events which the later compiler of the *Great Chronicle of Tours* erroneously brought together.

Let us return to the date of Fulk's death. Fulk was very much alive in 958 when he had participated alongside Theobald of Blois and others in an assembly at Verron. Perhaps the clearest indication of by when Fulk was dead is a confirmation of a donation of land at *Varennes* to the monastery of Saint-Florent of Saumur made by a woman called *Aremburg*. This confirmation was made in September 960 at a public *placitum* held at Rivarennes, near Chinon in the Touraine, and was signed by Count Theobald, his probable son *Teutbaldi junioris*, Hugh Count of Le Mans and Geoffrey Greymantle, called *Gausfredi comitis*.[1] I would suggest that as Geoffrey is already being called a count then it is probable that his father Fulk was already dead, which would mean that he had either died earlier in 960 or in 959. Finally, whereas the Tours tradition equates the eighteenth year of Fulk's comital power (and hence his death) as being in about 958/59 there is one other strange piece of evidence which should be mentioned. This is a very short obituary list from Saint-Aubin of Angers which Louis Halphen claimed supports Mabille's suggestion that Fulk died in 960.[2] But this 'Catalogue', as Halphen calls it, actually reads '*FULCO rex* (*sic*), *annis XX com*[*itatus*]', which would suggest a date of death *after* 960, not 960 as Halphen says.[3]

In summary, there were some significant raids on coastal Brittany in the later 950s culminating in an attack on Nantes, probably in 959 but possibly at the beginning of 960.

Connection with the 'Norman War'

The compiler of the *Chronicle of Nantes* simply calls the Northmen who attacked coastal Brittany and Nantes *Normanni*. This is his usual word for Scandinavian raiders in general. There is not the slightest hint that he meant *Normands* from the future Normandy. In spite of this from at least the time of René Merlet and Ferdinand Lot, historians have almost unanimously made a link between the raids on Brittany and Nantes, as reported by the chronicler of Nantes, and Richard I's so-called Norman War in the early 960s involving Theobald the Trickster the count of Blois. According to this reading of history the Northmen who raided Brittany and then

[1] The confirmation is reproduced in R. Latouche, *Histoire du comté du Maine pendant le Xe et XIe siècle* (Paris, 1910), pp. 161-62.
[2] É. Mabille in *Introduction* to the *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou*, eds. P. A. Marchegay and A. Salmon (Paris, 1856), p. LXII; L. Halphen, *Le comté d'Anjou au XIe siècle*, p. 6, n. 3.
[3] L. Halphen, *Le comté d'Anjou au XIe siècle*, p. 354. Halphen dates this 'Catalogue' to 1155; for which dating I can find no evidence.

attacked Nantes were none other than Richard I's own Northmen from Rouen - or as is sometimes anachronistically said 'Normans'. Is this a reasonable reflection or interpretation of Leopold von Ranke's 'what really happened', or is it just wishful thinking? Is it in fact another lurking assumption?

Let us now look at the historiographical consensus. When discussing the outbreak of the 'Norman War' and the involvement, according to Dudo of Saint-Quentin, of Fulk II's son Geoffrey Greymantle, Ferdinand Lot wrote: 'It is probable that Theobald [count of Blois] held a rancour towards Richard and that on the death of his father (11 Nov 958?) Geoffrey Greymantle, count of Anjou, inherited these hostile sentiments towards the Normans'.[1] Lot seems to have taken evidence from the Tours tradition regarding the date of Fulk's death, hence '11 November 958'. Yet only a page earlier after saying that Theobald of Chartres and Fulk of Anjou had conspired to kill Alan Barbe-Torte's son Drogo and take his lands, and that then suddenly a third knave/trickster (*larron*), Richard the *duc* (*sic*) of Normandy, arrived, Lot says that Richard took the town of Nantes 'vers 960?', but the counts of Chartres and Angers had not come to rescue the town.[2] There is a muddle here. If Fulk II had died in November 958, as Lot says he did, he certainly could not have come to Nantes' rescue 'vers 960', because the chronicler of Nantes is adamant that the people of Nantes had appealed to Fulk for help. Lot's 'vers 960?' is clearly influenced by his belief that the so-called Norman War involving Richard I of Rouen and Theobald the Trickster started in 960, and he has implicitly already linked the attack on Nantes with this Norman War. Closely following Lot's rather confused story, François Neveux says that after Drogo's death Theobald and Fulk had shared out Brittany between themselves but that this had neglected the interests of 'Richard of Normandy' and so as a consequence 'Richard retook the expansionary policy of his father' [William Longsword] and 'invaded Brittany and even sent a fleet into the estuary of the Loire […] that was repulsed by the people of Nantes', adding that this was 'before the death of Fulk the Good in 958'.[3] Pierre Bouet follows Neveux's lead almost word for word. He says that after Theobald and Fulk shared out Brittany 'Richard had reacted and sent a fleet into the estuary of the Loire against Nantes a little before 958'.[4] As has already been shown it was likely within the timeframe of late 958 to early 960 that Nantes was attacked. Late in 958 is possible even though Fulk was still very

[1] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 348, my translation.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 347.
[3] F. Neveux, *La Normandie des ducs aux rois. Xe-XIIe siècle* (Rennes, 1998), p. 50, my translation.
[4] P. Bouet, 'Le Mont-Saint-Michel entre Bretagne et Normandie de 960 à 1060', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et normands au Moyen-Age. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 165-200, at p. 168, my translation.

much active in that year, and according to the chronicler of Nantes he was alive when the attack happened. But 'a little before 958' can be ruled out.

Regardless of the precise dates of the attacks on Brittany and Nantes, all these eminent historians make the unsubstantiated and very 'lurking' assumption that it was Richard's Northmen of 'Normandy' who were responsible. Jean-Christophe Cassard, the historian of the vikings in Brittany, places the attack on Nantes in 960, not in 958 or before. He says that those responsible were 'a group of pirates acting more or less for the account of the *duc* of Normandy'.[1] Cassard does not present any support for his dating or regarding why Richard I was supposedly involved, even as a possible employer of mercenary pirates. Within a short résumé of the conventionally proposed course and context of the so-called Norman War, Pierre Bauduin says the reason for the conflict 'can perhaps be sought in the affairs of Brittany,' and explicitly following Ferdinand Lot and Henri Prentout that 'Theobald could have held a resentment towards Richard from the intervention of a Norman fleet at Nantes', an event that he does not venture to date.[2] Nevertheless, in a long footnote, and after stressing Dudo's 'recurrent theme' that the *ducs* of the Northmen of Rouen held suzerainty over Brittany, Bauduin says: 'La restauration - ou plutôt l'instauration - de l'autorité directe du comte de Rouen en Normandie occidentale à partir des années 950/960 a très bien pu être une source de tensions avec Thibaud, qui avait fait entrer le comte de Rennes dans sa mouvance.'[3]

It was René Merlet who most emphatically argued that all the attacks along the Breton coasts and on Nantes took place in a single year, 960, and that the *Normands* of the future Normandy were responsible. He also places the start of the Norman War in the same year. It must have been a very busy year.

Merlet wrote that 'it is certain that the siege and taking of Nantes was an important episode in this fight between Brittany and Normandy'.[4] As will be shown later that this is certain is very far from being the case. Merlet's story of all these events is presented in an 1895 article whose primary aim was to argue for a late date for the arrival of the relics of the Breton Saint Magloire at Paris. From the start Merlet rather blithely accepts Lot's date of 960 for the attack on Nantes and, based on the date of 11 November for Fulk the Good's death contained in the *Great Chronicle of Tours*, he thus places Fulk's death on 11 November 960. His argument that the relics of Saint Magloire arrived in Paris with Salvator, the bishop of Aleth, after 956 is very

[1] J-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 99, my translation.
[2] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 169, my translation.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 169, n. 116.
[4] R. Merlet, 'Les origines', p. 263, my translation.

well made although it is not of particular relevance for our purposes.[1] Merlet then makes use of his assumed 960 date of the raids on the Breton coasts, the siege and taking of Nantes and the start of the Norman War, which he then couples with a statement in the *Translatio sancti Maglorii* which says: 'Verum, dum per triennium hec acerrima perduraret guerra, […] venerandus Salvator episcopus cum multorum sanctorum pignoribus, paucis fidelïbus suo comitatui junctis, ob imminentem rabiem barbarorum, Parisius, urbem nobilem munitissimamque, adierunt.'[2] Merlet interprets this as meaning that three years after the outbreak of the 'war' between 'Richard of Normandy' and Theobald the Trickster the Breton monks and clerics installed for some time at Léhon had been scared by the fury of the 'pirates danois',[3] and Bishop Salvator had thus decided to seek safety in Paris where he arrived with the relics of Saint Magloire in 963.[4] Merlet suggests that Dudo of Saint-Quentin says the war broke out 'immediately' after the marriage of Richard of Rouen and Emma, the daughter of Hugh the Great and sister of Hugh Capet, a marriage which we know from Flodoard of Reims took place in 960.[5] Thus in a rather circular fashion we once again get to the desired conclusion: 960 was also the date of the start of the Norman War. In *De moribus* Dudo does not actually say that the war 'immediately followed' Richard and Emma's marriage and he typically gives no date. It is just that the section where Dudo first mentions Theobald's hostility towards Richard follows the mention of the marriage. Merlet can then wrap up his chronology nicely by following Lot in suggesting the 'Danish pirates' Dudo says Richard had called in to help him only arrived at Jeufosse at the end of 962, but also because of the winter they did not start to make attacks until the spring of 963,[6] which is of course precisely three years from the start of the Norman War which Merlet identifies as the attack on Nantes, and the attacks on the coasts of Brittany which, strangely, he says happened *after* Nantes but in the same year.[7]

In summary Merlet states: 'La dévastation des côtes bretonnes par la flotte normande, la prise de la ville de Nantes et la fuite des prêtres bretons au monastère de Léhon, tous événements qui se rapportent au début de la guerre, ont donc eu lieu dans le courant de cette année 960.'[8]

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[1] Merlet was arguing against an earlier date which was then and now conventional. The literature on the translations the Breton saints, including Saint Magloire's relics, is vast.
[2] R. Merlet, 'Les origines', p. 250.
[3] It should be noted that the translation of Saint Magloire does not say anything about 'Danish pirates', it just refers to the (expected) imminent fury of barbarians.
[4] R. Merlet, 'Les origines', p. 250.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 960: *Annales*, pp. 148-49; *Annals*, p. 64.
[6] R. Merlet, 'Les origines', p. 265, n. 2.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 265: 'Après avoir saccagé le pays de Nantes, les Normands continuèrent vraisemblablement à exercer leurs ravages par toute la Bretagne, dont les habitants, privés de chef national, n'étaient guère en état de leur résister.'
[8] R. Merlet, 'Les origines', p. 265, n. 2.

As for the cause of the arrival of these Northmen, Merlet says that Richard's fleet came to Nantes 'faire valoir de prétendus droits à la suzeraineté de la Bretagne'.[1] It was the 'ravages' of 'the Danish pirates' called into Gaul by 'Richard of Normandy' (in 962/63) that had forced the Breton monks who had earlier found refuge at Léhon to move to Paris for safety. But it was Richard's *Normands* who had attacked Nantes and the Breton coasts, although Merlet simply makes this assumption and explains Dudo's silence about these events as follows: 'On sait en effet positivement qu'une importante flotte de Normands dévasta à cette époque toutes les côtes de Bretagne. Dudon, fidèle à son parti pris de passer sous silence les entreprises des ducs de Normandie contre une province soi-disant soumise, n'a pas dit mot de cette expédition.'[2]

Merlet's rather circular presentation of all these matters when coupled with Lot's views has been swallowed somewhat uncritically by most subsequent historians. The story is, however, full of lurking assumptions. Some of these have already been shown to be suspect. First, putting all the evidence from Nantes, Tours and Angers together, the Scandinavian raids on Brittany mentioned by the chronicler of Nantes took place during the later years of the 950s culminating in the siege of Nantes in about 959 (or possibly early 960). We simply cannot place all these attacks in 960. Second, Fulk II's death might have happened in 960, as Merlet suggests (but not in 958 as Lot confusingly maintained), however the date of 11 November, the festival of Saint-Martin of Tours, can be very much doubted.

But we still need to look at the start of the so-called Norman War to see if the generally assumed direct link between Richard of Rouen and the attacks on Brittany and Nantes has any real foundation.

The start of the 'Norman War'

As we have seen, when the attacks on coastal Brittany and on Nantes are mentioned at all they are, nowadays at least, invariably linked with the beginning of the so-called Norman War.

The only reliable evidence regarding this supposed 'war' is given by Flodoard of Reims. His contemporary *Annals* first report that at the beginning of 961: 'At Soissons, a royal *placitum* and a meeting of various *principes* was held. In an effort to obstruct this, Richard, the son of the Northman William [Longsword], approached until he was met by some of the king's [Lothar III's] *fideles*. After a number of his own men were killed, Richard fled.'[3] This assembly of King Lothar III and his *principes* was likely concerned with trying to counteract Hugh the Great's

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 274.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 263.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 961: *Annales*, p. 150; *Annals*, p. 65.

son Hugh Capet who had recently become Richard's brother-in-law and who had become 'overmighty'.[1] It seems Richard had wanted to disrupt this gathering or maybe even just barge in. This is followed by Flodoard telling us that in 962: 'A certain man named Theobald fought against the Northmen but was defeated and escaped by flight. Therefore, he considered his lord (*senior*) Hugh [Capet] to be hostile, so he went to the king [Lothar III]. He was received by Lothar and [his mother] Queen Gerberga and consoled with gentleness, and then he departed'.[2] Theobald of Blois had always been the man of the Robertian *dux Francorum* Hugh the Great and after Hugh's death in 956 he owed allegiance to Hugh's young son Hugh Capet.[3]

All these events in 961 and 962 had to do with the complex and ongoing struggles between the Robertians and the Carolingians for power in West Francia, a struggle which would not end until Hugh Capet became king of West Francia in 987.[4]

Perhaps thinking that Flodoard's report of Theobald of Blois's setback at the hands of the Northmen, the lack of any real support from his lord (*senior*) the Robertian Hugh Capet, and his subsequent meeting with the Carolingians Gerberga and her son king Lothar, could provide a fine opportunity to tell a ripping yarn presenting Richard in an heroic light, Dudo of Saint-Quentin weaves an extremely long and elaborate version replete with intrigue, betrayal and invented speeches put into the mouths of the protagonists.

Dudo starts by saying that while Richard was enjoying the partnership with his new wife he was also repressing 'the sudden tumults of wicked rebels throughout almost the whole of Francia and Burgundy by the power of his rightful dominion'.[5] None of these wicked rebels are named. He then introduces his villain and *bête noire* as 'a satrap by the name of Theobald' (*quidam satrapa nomine Tetboldus*), which is obviously just a slight variation on Flodoard's 'a certain man named Theobald' (*Tetbaldus quidam*). Theobald 'was inflamed by malevolent rage, and by jealousy and hatred, and began to connive against him [Richard] by means of numerous slanders, and to raise a quarrel against him, and needlessly to invade his land'. Then, again reflecting Flodoard's second short report, Dudo adds: 'However, seeing that of himself he [Theobald] could achieve nothing against him [Richard], he went to queen Gerberga, who was

[1] O. Guillot, *Le comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XIe siècle*, vol. 1, pp. 2-15; F. Lot, *Les deniers Carolingiens*, pp. 349-50; K. F. Werner, *Vom Frankenreich zur Entfaltung Deutschlands und Frankreichs. Ursprünge, Strukturen, Beziehungen. Ausgewählte Beiträge. Festgabe zu seinem sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Sigmaringen, 1984), pp. 247-77; E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 220, n. 412. Richard had married Hugh Capet's sister Emma in 960.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 962: *Annales*, p. 150; *Annals*, p. 66. Richer of Reims does not mention this.
[3] Although the fact is that at this time the young king Lothar and the similarly aged Hugh Capet were both effectively under the 'tutelage' of their uncle, the archbishop and duke Bruno the brother of the German king Otto (see Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, pp. 139-55).
[4] See P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV* and Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*; F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*.
[5] For this and what follows see Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 265-66; trans. Christiansen, pp. 139-40.

residing on the hill of Laon with her son Lothair, king of the Franks.' Being 'infected with the poison of jealously', Theobald complained that Richard 'who inactively holds the kingdom of Normandy and the Bretons' (*Northmannicum Britonumque tenes regnum quietus*) had been raised above the Franks 'with presumptuous audacity, and lords it insolently over all'. More complaints follow: that Richard 'domineers and rules like a king of the Franks'; that everything he does is to the disadvantage of the Franks; and that it is not honourable to either the queen, nor to the Franks, 'that one of these counts of ours should hold sway'. According to the canon of Saint-Quentin, Theobald then told Gerberga and Lothar that:

> It is surely a disgrace to your authority that he [Richard] gives orders to the Burgundians, accuses and upbraids the Aquitanians, rules and directs the Bretons and the Normans [*Northmannos*=Northmen] threatens and lays waste the Flemings, and binds to himself and conciliates the Danes (*Dacos*) and the Lotharingians and even the Saxons (*Saxones*). The English (*Angli*) also submit to him obediently; the Scots and the Irish (*Scoti et Hibernes*) are under his patronage.[1]

If that were not enough Dudo then adds: 'Indeed all peoples of all kingdoms attend him and obey him.'[2]

Before discussing Dudo's subsequent long story of the beginnings of the fight between Richard and Theobald a few words on his claims regarding Richard's position and power are perhaps in order. It is simply not true that Richard was holding the 'kingship' of both Normandy and 'the whole Breton region' in the years following Hugh the Great's death in 956. Even less that he was ruling almost the whole of Gaul or that he 'gives orders to the Burgundians, accuses and upbraids the Aquitanians, rules and directs the Bretons and the Normans, threatens and lays waste the Flemings, and binds to himself and conciliated the Danes and the Lotharingians and even the Saxons', or that 'the English also submit to him obediently, the Scots and all the Irish are ruled by his patronage', or, finally, that 'all peoples of all kingdoms attend him and obey him'. This is just wishful thinking and it more reflects the situation in Normandy and Norman concerns in Dudo's own time than anything to do with the mid-tenth century. With the exception of the Northmen of Rouen, Richard never held any suzerainty over any of these peoples at this time. It is also perhaps not without significance that Dudo makes basically the same claims of far-reaching suzerainty for Richard's father William Longsword using many of

[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 265; trans. Christiansen, p. 140
[2] *Ibid.*

the exact same words.[1] In regard to Brittany, in the previous chapter it has been argued that from the time of Rollo all the way through to the (possible) departure of 'Harald of Bayeux' in 954 (or shortly thereafter) the early Rouen rulers never had any real control or effective suzerainty over the Bretons, nor even had they extended their territory into the western parts of later 'Normandy', even the Cotentin and the Bessin. After the supposed 'ephemeral push' west of William Longsword in *circa* 931, which as was discussed in the previous chapter may have never happened at all, as far as the few reliable sources allow us to tell after the young Richard was saved by Hugh the Great's capture of Louis IV in 945 until Hugh's death in June 956 Richard was very much a pawn of the *duc Francorum*. Eric Christiansen puts it as follows:

> The disintegration of Normandy that followed [the murder of William Longsword] was not only, as Dudo suggests, owing to the rapacity of the neighbouring Frankish rulers, but also reflected the lack of any political unity among the Normans themselves; Richard I was installed as count of Rouen as a pawn of duke Hugh [the Great], during a phase of Capetian dominance, and his survival there always depended on his playing a peripheral rather than a central role in Frankish politics.[2]

Hugh had several times used Northmen in his long and complicated struggles with Louis IV and his other enemies, the last time as far as we know being in 949 when he used 'Northmen', possibly under the command of 'Harald of Bayeux', to help relieve Laon and then later in the same year to join his own men to come to Soissons.[3]. Dudo of Saint-Quentin himself even says that Richard had been 'linked' with Hugh 'by oath' while Hugh was alive,[4] which perhaps unintentionally indicates Richard's previous and obvious subservient position to Hugh. After Hugh's death in 956 Éric Van Torhoudt says 'his vassal Theobald the Trickster' continued

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[1] According to Dudo of Saint-Quentin (ed. Lair, p. 192; trans. Christiansen, p. 69), in the early years of William Longsword's 'reign': 'Then was William raised up on high by the slaughter and destruction of so many men, and gained possession of the two kingdoms of the Bretons and the Normans [*sic*] secure from war; nor did any man venture to quarrel with him anymore. The rulers of the Frankish people and the counts of the Burgundians were his servants. The Danes and the Flemings, the English and the Irish obeyed him, and the other peoples which dwelt in the vicinity of his kingdom obeyed his command with one accord.' Dudo also wrote (ed. Lair, pp. 163-64; trans. Christiansen, pp. 137-39) that when Hugh the Great was dying (in 956), Richard was 'holding the kingship of the Norman and Breton region tranquil and secure from enemies and no nation dared show violence towards the Richardians'. Hugh then 'handed over' his young daughter to Richard so that they should be married when she came of age. After Hugh had died all the Franks came together to pledge their allegiance to Richard, and while 'the wise and just duke Richard was beneficently ruling almost the whole of Gaul' he then married Hugh's daughter at Rouen with 'a company of the magnates of Normandy and the Breton region' in attendance.

[2] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. xvi.

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 949: *Annales*, pp. 124-25; *Annals*, p. 53. É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, vol. 1, p. 185, says that Hugh attacked the towns of Soissons and Laon 'grace à "ses mercenaires normands."' He adds (*ibid.*): 'S'il s'était agi de l'armée de Richard exécutant un service pour son seigneur, Flodoard l'aurait sans doute précisé, compte tenu de la valeur de cette information géopolitique.'

[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 264; trans. Christiansen, p. 138.

Hugh's policy of keeping Normandy within its first limits 'for his own account',[1] and certainly Richard, the 'count' of Rouen, only managed to establish any dominion over western Normandy much later in his life.[2]

We can now return to Theobald's visit to King Lothar and Queen Gerberga as told by the canon of Saint-Quentin. After Theobald's 'deceptive equivocations' were listened to by the 'angry queen' Theobald then suggested that young king Lothar should gather together forces from all Francia and Burgundy and advance on Richard's fortified cities, and if Richard should resist then Lothar should fight against him. If, however, Richard hid in his fortified cities then Lothar should assemble an army of 'Christians and pagans'[3] and lay waste all Richard's land and attack his strongholds. Theobald suggests that it might be more advisable to capture Richard by a deception 'than to devastate his realm and lay siege to his cities, because we will make no profit out of the campaign'.[4] Theobald then proposes to Gerberga that she ask her brother Bruno, the archbishop of Cologne, to arrange the deception, and 'by some cunning ruse entrap Richard'.[5] This she does and Bruno comes to the Vermandois in Francia and sends a 'certain bishop' to Richard to carry out the subterfuge. The bishop implores Richard to come to meet Bruno at Amiens because Bruno had heard of 'the disputes raised against' Richard and because 'he loves you'. Bruno, says the bishop, will reconcile Richard with the king, who is Bruno's nephew. Richard is deceived and sets out to meet Bruno. When he gets to Beauvais and Bruno is at Amiens, Richard is warned by two followers of Theobald, 'inspired by the divine Will', of the trap set for him at a proposed meeting at Amiens with the 'unworthy' archbishop Bruno. So Richard does not go to Amiens but returns to Rouen.[6] Bruno then proposes another place to meet on the river Epte but Richard declines this invitation and Bruno 'thwarted by this reply [...] returned home with the stratagem of so great a betrayal thoroughly unmasked'.[7] It would

[1] É. Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, vol. 1, p. 186, my translation.

[2] For which see *inter alia*, and at various places, É. Van Torhoudt, 'La résistance franco-bretonne à l'expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954): une marche de Normandie?'; *idem*, *Centralité et marginalité*; *idem*, 'Penser la première expansion de la Normandie. Réflexions sur les processus de territorialisation du pouvoir princier en Normandie occidentale (X^{e}-première moitié du XIe siècle)', in D. Bates and P. Bauduin (eds.), *911-2011. Penser les mondes normands médiévaux*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (29 septembre-2 octobre 2011)* (Caen, 2016), pp. 103-28; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*; M. Hagger, 'Confrontation and unification: approaches to the political history of Normandy, 911-1035', *History Compass* (2013), pp. 429-42; *idem*, 'How the west was won: the Norman dukes and the Cotentin, *c*. 987-*c*. 1087', *Journal of Medieval History*, 38 (2012), pp. 20-55; *idem*, *Norman Rule in Normandy, 911-1144* (Woodbridge, 2017); D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066*; L. Abrams, 'Early Normandy', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 35, *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2012* (Woodbridge, 2013).

[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 266; trans. Christiansen, p. 140.

[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 266; trans. Christiansen, p. 141.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 267; trans. Christiansen, pp. 141-42. Bruno never came to the Vermandois at this time; he was busy elsewhere. F. Lot recognised this (see *Les derniers Carolingiens*, pp. 348-49), yet he still rather strangely

seem that Dudo's introduction of Archbishop Bruno here was inspired by Flodoard's short report that at the beginning of 962: 'Queen Gerberga obtained a meeting with her brother Bruno, who 'suggested' (that is instructed) that the diocese of Reims not be given to Hugh [the deposed archbishop of Reims] as his brothers were wanting.'[1] We do not know where this meeting took place, but it was in part about ecclesiastical matters concerning the long-contested incumbency of the archdiocese of Reims; it was certainly not about Richard's 'Normandy'. Eric Christiansen quite rightly says 'there is no reliable evidence of any interest in Normandy by either him [Bruno] or by the queen [Gerberga]'.[2]

The canon of Saint-Quentin is, however, still as keen as ever to present Richard as a big player on the scene, a player so important that the venerable and powerful East Frankish archbishop and duke Bruno[3] had been persuaded by the arch-villain Theobald to come to West Francia to try to set a 'treacherous' trap for Richard. Not to put too fine a point on it this is all nonsense. Dudo's whole elaborate story of all these machinations is just the lead-up to his novelistic telling of Richard's defeat and then his victory over Theobald - as he would have found in Flodoard's laconic *Annals*. After Bruno had gone home 'shamefaced' Dudo embarks on one of his long passages of praise for Richard, with little (pseudo) historical information at all.[4] But we are told that Theobald 'smouldered', and was yet again 'tormented by envy and anger'.[5] According to the Saint-Quentin canon Theobald finally got King Lothar to join in his plans and deceit. Lothar sent an envoy to Richard proposing they join together to 'crush and scatter and subdue Theobald' and 'beat down the Flemings, and the other peoples in rebellion against us'.[6] The envoy asked Richard to come and meet Lothar and confer with him.[7] Richard was deceived and set out to meet Lothar 'at the place of assembly'.[8] But the king was not there, he was 'on the little river Eaulne (*super Helnae fluviolum*), with trickery in mind'.[9] Lothar had

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wants to admit there was a planned meeting at Amiens, although he does conclude by saying: 'En tous cas il faut rejeter comme incertaines et même colomnieuses les accusations de Dudon contre Brunon et Gerberge.'

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 962: *Annales*, p. 150; *Annals*, p. 66. See also Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 2, book 3, chaps. 18-19, pp. 24-25.

[2] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 219, n. 403. It is possible that Dudo also used/changed some of Flodoard's earlier annals concerning Gerberga, Bruno and other characters and places mentioned in his tale. In 957 just for example (cf. *Annals*, p. 62) there was trouble in Flanders involving Baldwin and the *castrum* of Amiens. These matters also involved Gerberga, Lothar and Bruno, the latter coming into Francia with an army; perhaps similarly, and regarding the same people, in 946, 954 and 959. A thorough comparison of the similarities between these and other of Flodoard's annals and Dudo's stories would be very worthwhile. It is noticeable that Henri Prentout's usually excellent 'critical' faculty seems to have deserted him for these later years.

[3] Bruno was made duke of Lotharingia in 953.

[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 268-70; trans. Christiansen, pp. 142-45.

[5] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 270; trans. Christiansen, p. 144.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 271; trans. Christiansen, p. 145.

[9] *Ibid*.

'combined with Richard's enemies in the plot'. These enemies are named as 'Theobald of Chartres, Geoffrey of Anjou [the son of Fulk II 'the Good'], and Baldwin, count of Flanders, who were joined by an army of many of his enemies'.[1] In advance of the meeting, Richard, always alert for Frankish trickery, sent out scouts (*exploratores*) who found Lothar in the company of Theobald and some of Richard's other enemies. The scouts left the king's presence, but then 'behold!' they saw 'the armies of counts Theobald, Geoffrey, and Baldwin, with mail-coats and helmets, plunging here and there at a gallop, and longing for the command to attack Richard and his men in a set battle'.[2] Richard was alerted to all this by one of his scouts. Dudo then tells a long and ripping yarn, with lots of quoted dialogue, about how Richard's enemies were suddenly nearly upon him. Richard left his meal and escaped across the river Béthune (*trans Deppae alveum*), and 'there awaited his supporting army'.[3] But some of the enemy caught Richard in mid-stream (after he had already crossed it!). In a highly colourful account reminiscent even of the *Song of Roland* one of Richard's henchmen called Walter managed to rescue him, while the 'rest of the enemy were routed and slain'. The fight continued. Richard was advised to withdraw to Rouen but he rejected the advice and wanted to attack. Finally, however, 'the older ones' persuaded him to withdraw to Rouen 'in haste to avoid capture'.[4]

Even putting to one side all the legendary details, invented speeches and garbled chronology, whether this defeat of Richard on the 'little tributaries of the Dieppe' ever happened might be doubted. Certainly, the location is far from the 'usual frontier on the Bresle, and so an improbable place in which to trap the Norman count'.[5]

After highlighting the differences between Flodoard and Dudo of Saint-Quentin on the question of who was responsible for the fight involving Richard in 961 (Flodoard saying it was Richard and Dudo putting the blame on Theobald), Ferdinand Lot wrote: 'L'autorité de l'annaliste Rémois (Flodoard) est d'ailleurs préférable à celle du chanoine de Saint-Quentin, car les prétextes que ce dernier attribue à Lothaire pour abuser Richard sont d'une absurdité flagrante'. But then Lot backs off, saying, 'ceci dit le récit de Dudon', about Richard's defeat in 961, 'est suffisamment acceptable'. Indeed, trying to reconcile the two conflicting reports Lot then says: 'Nous pouvons croire que Richard, battu près de Soissons, fut poursuivi jusque sur les bords de l'Eaulne, et il est parfaitement admissible que les "fidèles du roi" adversaires

[1] *Ibid*.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 272; trans. Christiansen, p. 146.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 220, n. 412.

du duc (sic) de Normandie aient été Thibaud, Geoffroi Grisegonelle et Baudoin.'[1] This is just special pleading and imagination. It is more likely as Eric Christiansen says that 'Dudo's tale of a (later?) Frankish invasion or raid may be a drastic relocation and distortion of that incident [when Richard fled from Soissons in 961], recast in the mould of Richard's supposed escape from the wiles of archbishop Bruno at Amiens'.[2] This is probably correct. Dudo would have known of Richard's defeat and flight from one of King Lothar's assemblies from Flodoard, but here as elsewhere he wants to present Richard in a more heroic light, as well as having Theobald as the villain of the piece, and, as with the tale of Archbishop Bruno, having Richard being so important that King Lothar had set out to trap him at a place deep within Richard's own territory.

Next it seems Dudo set to reframing and rewriting Flodoard's only other report of Theobald of Blois in these years. It will be recalled that Flodoard states that in 962: 'A certain man named Theobald fought against the Northmen but was defeated and escaped by flight. Therefore, he considered his lord (*senior*) Hugh [Capet] to be hostile, so he went to the king [Lothar III]. He was received by Lothar and Queen Gerberga and consoled with gentleness, and then he departed'.[3] As we have seen Dudo turned Theobald's meeting with Lothar and Gerberga into a fancy tale of intrigue and duplicity. He also places the meeting before both Richard's defeat and flight (from the Béthune or Soissons) and before the 'Northmen's' subsequent victory over Theobald, another indication of the 'historical novel' character of Dudo's stories. Having valiantly (though implicitly ignominiously) escaped from the river Béthune, Dudo has people flooding to Richard's side and urging that he should exact retribution on King Lothar and Theobald 'for the deception they had planned', and that he should 'invade their kingdom'. We then have another panegyric about Richard's good works, his care for orphans, minors, exiles, widows and refugees, and how he rejected pagans and reprobates. Richard's goodness was so great that it was published 'far and wide throughout the whole of Europe'.[4] Theobald, however, was still full of 'the poisonous gall of treachery' and advised King Lothar to besiege and capture

[1] F. Lot, *Les deniers Carolingiens*, p. 350. See also P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 168, n. 111.
[2] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 220, n. 412.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 962: *Annals*, p. 66; *Annales*, p. 153. It must be strongly emphasised that Flodoard does not say who the 'Northmen' who defeated Theobald were, or where this fight took place. Because many historians continue to place an unwarranted confidence in Dudo's 'likely stories' Flodoard's simple account is immediately equated with Dudo's long tale of Theobald's defeat at Ermentruville near Rouen. That Flodoard's Northmen were those of Richard of Rouen can be doubted and the place of Theobald's defeat should not immediately be placed near Rouen. Flodoard is usually very precise in identifying and naming the leaders of different Scandinavian forces (including Richard's and his father William's), going all the way back to the 920s. It is quite possible that Theobald's defeat took place somewhere completely different and that the Northmen involved were a group other than those of Richard of Rouen.
[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 272-73; trans. Christiansen, pp. 146-47.

the city of Évreux and promised him in exchange that he would reclaim the whole of the Northmen's region for the king.[1] This, says Dudo, Lothar did, and he then gave the city to Theobald 'of his own accord, as they had agreed'.[2] For some reason Richard was supposedly 'much aggrieved at the unexpected outcome of these events' (i.e. the capture of Évreux by Lothar), although why this would be so is difficult to explain because the Rouen Northmen never had any interest in Évreux at this time.[3]

This putative royal taking of Évreux is only reported by Dudo and later, following him, by William of Jumièges, and both in very dubious terms. Ferdinand Lot persuasively and vehemently rejected it.[4] Pierre Bauduin on the other hand thinks it 'n'est en soi pas totalement incohérente',[5] although he argues that any influence of the count of Rouen in Évreux can only be established, and very tentatively at that, from 965 at the earliest.[6] Whatever the case, Dudo then has Richard bringing together his army and wasting and burning the region of Chartres and the Dunois (the *pagus* of Châteaudun), before returning home unafraid.[7] From Évreux Theobald then invaded the Rouen Northmen's land. Richard was informed. Theobald reached Ermentruville (*as casas Hermentrudis villae*, now the quarter of Saint-Sever in Rouen).[8] Finally, we get Dudo's version of Flodoard's short comment that some Northmen had defeated

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 273; trans. Christiansen, p. 147; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 168 and n. 112.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 273; trans. Christiansen, p. 147.
[3] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, pp. 220-21, n. 416.
[4] F. Lot, *Les deniers Carolingiens*, pp. 350-51: 'Le récit du siège et de la prise d'Évreux par Thibaud et le roi Lothaire m'inspire plus d'un doute. Flodoard qui s'intéressait à tout ce qui se passait dans le nord de la France ne dit pas un mot de cet événement, ce qui ne laisserait pas d'être bizarre, On ne comprend pas très bien que Lothaire n'eût pris Évreux que pour remettre cette ville à Thibaud. D'ailleurs, d'après l'ordre même du récit de Dudon, le siège d'Évreux ne peut être placé qu'à la fin de 961 ou au commencement de 962 ; or, pendant toute la fin de l'année 961 Lothaire fut occupé par une expédition en Bourgogne, et, au début de l'année suivante, le roi se trouva absorbé par les intriques de toutes sortes occasionnées par la vacance du siège archiépiscopal de Reims ; enfin Lothaire eut à régler un différend entre Arnoul de Flandre et un *nepos* homonyme. Où trouver place pour un siège d'Évreux ? Nous croyons bien que cette ville tomba au pouvoir du comte de Chartres (fin 961-962), mais la participation personnelle du roi au siège d'Évreux nous parait assez douteuse.'
[5] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 170.
[6] *Ibid*., pp. 170-72.
[7] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 274; trans. Christiansen, p. 148. In a necrology of Chartres Cathedral we find a reference to a fire which destroyed the town and the church on 5 August 962, and also that on 7 August *in an undated year* two men were killed by Northmen at 'Charles's windmill': 'nones augusti, anno dominice incarnationis dcccclxi, urbs Cartonensis et ecclesia Sancte Marie succensa est', and 'vii, idus augusti, interfectus est Gerardus, frater Bernardi apud Caroliventatorium a Normannis; et Ragembertus miles a Normannis' (see *Cartulaire de Notre-Dame de Chartres*, eds. E. de Lépinois and L. Merlet (Chartres, 1864), vol. 3, pp. 148, 150). This might seem to support Dudo's story but we must be cautious. There is no certainty that the fire in 962 was caused by Northmen or that the two Chartres citizens were killed by Rouen-based Northmen or even if they were killed in 962 at all. If they were all it shows is that Richard was attacking Theobald's territory not that the rest of Dudo's tale is true. On the other hand, it is perhaps more likely that Chartres burned but it was not a result of any attack by Northmen (who are not mentioned). In addition, the two citizens who were killed by Northmen might have died on the occasion of another attack in or near Chartres, of which there were several, including, of course, in 911.
[8] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 275; trans. Christiansen, p. 149.

Theobald in 962 and that Theobald had fled. It is as we might expect a ripping yarn. It will be quoted in full for reasons that will become clear later:

> The most valiant marquess Richard sought out a passage at another harbour, crossed the water of the Seine at the dead of night, and early in the morning he charged at Theobald, and joined battle against him with a few men.
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> Now in the first shock of battle they fought with shortened throwing-spears and lances; and in the second, with shining swords. Then the valiant band of Normans (*robusta manus Northmannorum*), with shields overlapping and locked together, advanced with a line of gleaming swords, and attacked the Frankish warriors confronting them. They slashed to the front, to the right, and to the left, and fearlessly prostrated and dispersed the enemy battalions, riding over the corpses of the slain and over the close-packed formation of those who resisted, and then wheeled back to fight the scattered units of the survivors. Here and here is the slaughtering of the Franks, and the motley band is punished, and put to death.
>
> For the fierce and warlike nation of the Normans chases round, passing through the perilous combat like wolves through pens of sheep, ruthlessly killing the enemy troops and laying them low. Indeed, as the Ricardians were shouting with one accord that the battle-field belonged to Richard, to the great duke, the fighting spirit deserted all the Theobaldines, and security and life given up for lost. Whosoever knows not where to turn in order to go free, hides wherever he cannot be seen. Some get themselves into thickets made dense by interwoven bushes, others into bogs even more densely rooted with both alders and poplars, for fear they should be killed by the Normans.[1]

Following another praise poem for Richard, Dudo continues:

> And finally, count Theobald was bereft of his faithful followers, who had been put to flight, knocked down and slain, and he sought safety in a very rapid flight with a few men, and once he had spurred his horses to the gallop, he missed the turning to Évreux, which his own men were holding. For on that day, through the merits of the blessed marquess Richard, he experienced the misfortune of a fourfold defeat. That is, he beheld his faithful followers laid low in battle; he himself was routed and wounded; one of his sons was seized by death, and fell; the city of Chartres and its fort were burned by fire and collapsed to the ground. But the marquess Richard, highly famed for his goodness,

[1] *Ibid.*

> was wearied by the fighting and by the protracted pursuit of the enemy, and went back to Rouen that evening. And getting up early in the morning, and going to the battle-field, he found six hundred and forty men slain, and felt much pity at the death of so many. He ordered them to be buried. Those who were still alive he had carried gently to Rouen on litters, and healed. Besides that, he had the thickets and bogs searched, and found many dead and wounded, and he attended to them with the same dutifulness.[1]

There are some striking similarities between Dudo's story of this fight between Richard and Theobald and King Lothar supposedly in the early 960s and other events in 943-944 reported by Flodoard and Richer of Reims. First, Dudo has Theobald asking Lothar to take Évreux for him, in return for which Theobald would conquer the whole of the Northmen's region for the king.[2] This Lothar did and Theobald was supposedly still in Évreux later.[3] Later, after Richard had defeated Theobald, the latter was full of contrition and came begging for Richard's forgiveness and he gives Évreux 'back' to Richard - which will be discussed later.[4]

Leaving to one side the fact that Richard had never held Évreux at any point before this and, therefore, Theobald could not possibly have given him the city 'back', Flodoard only mentions Évreux three times in the whole of his *Annals*. All three are in connection with events which happened in 943-44. After William Longsword's death Flodoard *s.a.* 943 says:

> Hugh [the Great], the duke of the Franks, fought frequently against the Northmen who had come as pagans or had returned to paganism. They had killed a great many Christian footsoldiers (*pedites*) of Hugh's, but, with the agreement of the Christian Northmen who were holding the place, Hugh was able to take the *castrum* of Évreux, killing many of the Northmen and putting the others to flight.[5]

Pierre Bauduin points out that the 'episode shows, three decades after Rollo's baptism, the fragility of the cohabitation of the Christian population and elements remaining pagan'.[6] There then follows the arrival from overseas of the pagan king Setric in 943 and his defeat by King Louis IV's mounted troops as reported by both of the Reims' chroniclers Flodoard and Richer.[7] A little later the same year after a meeting with Hugh at Compiègne 'King Louis set out for

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 276; trans. Christiansen, p. 150.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 273; trans. Christiansen, p. 147.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 278; trans. Christiansen, p. 152.
[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 279-80; trans. Christiansen, pp. 153-54.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 943: *Annales*, p. 88; *Annals*, p. 38.
[6] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 164, my translation.
[7] Flodoard *s.a.* 943: *Annales*, p. 88; *Annals*, p. 38; Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 53, pp. 142-43. See S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine'.

Rouen and received Évreux from Duke Hugh [the Great]'.[1] Then in 944, after a major falling out between Louis and Hugh over the matter of Bayeux, Louis took hostages from the inhabitants of Évreux. Hugh claimed them for himself saying that the town was submitted to him, which was theoretically correct but Hugh had recently ceded the town to Louis. But Louis paid no attention to Hugh's demand and refused to give the hostages back.[2] These real historical events involving a bitter rivalry between Duke Hugh and the young King Louis for the control of the town of Évreux are highly reminiscent of Dudo's tale of the opposition of Richard I to Theobald and King Lothar, and here too the control of Évreux. But as well as the bitter rivalry between Hugh and Louis all these historical events reported by Flodoard (and partially by Richer) are intimately tied up with fights of the Franks against various groups of Northmen, first at Évreux then on the river Seine (against Setric etc.), and then, importantly, against the Northmen in command of Bayeux.

Here the similarities between Flodard's reports and Dudo of Saint-Quentin's stories become even more striking. In 944 Flodoard says that Hugh the Great and other groups of his men 'journeyed across the Seine to Bayeux and besieged the *civitas*'.[3] Flodoard then adds: 'King Louis had given Bayeux to Hugh if Hugh should aid the king in conquering this group (*gens*) of the Northmen,'[4] just like, though somewhat reversed, Dudo has Theobald promising King Lothar to conquer 'all of the Northmen's region' for him if Lothar would capture Évreux for him. Richer of Reims says that Louis asked Hugh for help in fighting the Northmen and Louis 'agreed to turn over the city of Bayeux to him [Hugh] if he could capture it with the rest'.[5] The 'rest' (*cum reliquis*) probably means other possessions of the Northmen. According to Flodoard, Louis then ordered Hugh to raise the siege but after Hugh left Louis took Bayeux for himself.[6] Just before this Flodoard has King Louis together with Arnulf Count of Flanders, Herluin Count of Montreuil and various bishops of Francia and Burgundy, advancing towards Rouen against

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 943: *Annales*, p. 89; *Annals*, p. 38.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 944: *Annales*, p. 95; *Annals*, p. 41; P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, p. 124. According to Richer of Reims after entering Bayeux and receiving the submission of the townsmen Louis had left for Évreux, took the town without any resistance and took hostages (cf. *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 42, pp. 259-61).
[3] *Ibid*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 42, pp. 258-59.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 944: *Annales*, p. 95; *Annals*, p. 41. Hugh obviously resented having to concede Bayeux to Louis, the consequences for the young king would be severe. P. Lauer (*Le règne de Louis IV*, pp. 124, 126) remarks that: 'Lorsqu'il apprit que le roi était entre pacifiquement à Bayeux, son ressentiment dut encore en être augmenté. Ainsi naissait un nouvel et très grave élément de discorde entre deux hommes qui avaient, jusque-là, presque constamment lutté l'un contre l'autre […]. Hugues le Grand cherchait à se venger de son humiliation.' Richer says, regarding Hugh's humiliation at Bayeux: 'The duke frequently reminded his men of the wrong done to him and plotted with them to bring about the ruin of the king, urging his friends and faithful men to lose no time in exacting revenge on his behalf' (Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 43, pp. 260-61).

the Northmen there. Count Arnulf had gone ahead and 'routed the Northmen who were keeping guard at Arques-la-Bataille (*apud Areas*)', which is situated near the confluence of the rivers Eaulne and Béthune, and 'he prepared the king's crossing of the river [Béthune]'.[1] As a consequence 'King Louis was able to reach Rouen and was received by the Northmen in the *urbs*, while those who were against receiving the king took to the sea'.[2] It was immediately after this that Hugh the Great went to Bayeux to besiege the city on behalf of King Louis.

Is it just a coincidence that Dudo first has Richard going to meet King Lothar but finding he was not there because he was 'on the little river Eaulne (*super Helnae fluviolum*)', and then suffering a defeat on the river Béthune, which Theobald was trying to cross before fleeing back to Rouen, while Flodoard has Count Arnulf routing the Rouen Northmen at Arques-la-Bataille (situated near the confluence of the rivers Eaulne and Béthune), who then would have retreated to Rouen, and thereby allowing the king's forces to cross the river Béthune and reach Rouen? It is doubtful. I suggest that what the canon of Saint-Quentin has done here is take the short annals of Flodoard concerning dynastic-related Frankish events in 961 and 962 and then embellished and augmented them by appropriating various important elements and locations from Flodoard's *Annals* for 943 and 944 concerning King Louis IV, Hugh the Great, Count Arnulf, Évreux, Bayeux, the river Béthune, and Rouen and its Northmen. This was a time when Richard was a boy and close to being eradicated by King Louis, other Frankish magnates and invading pagan Northmen. Dudo has changed the players and the (implicit) dates, so that now Richard of Rouen is the primary protagonist and ultimate hero while his enemies of the early 940s, Louis IV and Count Arnulf of Flanders are transformed into their respective sons, Lothar III and Baldwin of Flanders. Regarding Count Theobald (who died in 975), he is mentioned by Flodoard in 962 as fighting and being defeated by the (supposedly Rouen) Northmen, so in Dudo's eyes he would have been a natural villain. Another reason Theobald was perhaps made into Dudo's villain is for literary consistency. In 945 the young king Louis IV had been handed over by Hugh the Great to his vassal Theobald and kept in prison for almost a year. Louis had fallen into Hugh's hands because of a betrayal by the Northmen of 'Harald of Bayeux'. The king had first escaped with the help of 'a certain Northman who was his faithful man'. But once back in Rouen, Louis had been captured by other Northmen there who Louis had considered faithful. These Northmen then gave Louis to Hugh the Great who then handed him over to Count Theobald to be imprisoned and Louis was only released on Hugh's instructions in 946.[3]

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[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 944: *Annales*, p. 95; *Annals*, p. 40.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 945-946: *Annales*, pp. 98-101; *Annals*, pp. 42-44.

Dudo transforms these events as told by Flodoard into a long and fabulous story of the young Richard being betrayed by King Louis after his father's death (implicitly therefore in 943), and being held captive by Louis (at first unknowingly), first for 'a long time at Évreux' (no less!) and then at Rouen.[1] Richard only escaped with the help of a faithful 'young knight called Osmund'.[2] He was whisked away first to Laon and then to Coucy. In all these events it is Évreux, Laon and Coucy that Dudo repeatedly mentions, which is probably not coincidental. It is also not coincidental that in the same year when Theobald still had Louis in custody, 946, Hugh the Great 'had received the *castrum* of Laon' from Queen Gerberga and 'committed it to [...] Theobald', after which Louis was released.[3] We have already seen how Évreux features so much in Dudo's stories of Richard and Theobald of Blois, and perhaps why. The long involvement of Theobald with Coucy will be highlighted later.

Geoffrey Greymantle was also according to Dudo one of the Frankish magnates who had attacked Richard of Rouen, implicitly in 961. Geoffrey was the son of Fulk II 'the Good' the count of Anjou who was discussed earlier. Fulk was a close confederate of Theobald of Blois. In fact, after Fulk had lost his wife Gerberga he had married Theobald's sister sometime after she herself was widowed in 952 on the death of her Breton husband duke Alan Barbe-Torte. It is also worth stressing that it is only in the period 943-945 that we know with any certainty that groups of 'new' Northmen had arrived in northern Neustria. The pagan king Setric arrived on the Seine in 943. Then by 944 there seem to have been Northmen at Bayeux, who we know were already commanded by a certain Scandinavian chieftain called Harald in 945.[4] It is also perhaps not coincidental that William of Jumièges has this Harald of the 940s and 950s as also being the leader of the Danes who Dudo says came to help Richard I in the early 960s.

With regard to the fight between Theobald and some Northmen (Richard's?) in 962, Dudo's tale of the battle was clearly prompted by Flodoard's report of Theobald's defeat and flight. But regarding Dudo's description of the battle we might look a little deeper for other of his inspirations. In fact, Dudo's description of the course of the battle mirrors in many ways Richer

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 224-35; trans. Christiansen, pp. 100-1. E. Christainsen, *Dudo*, p. 211, n. 331, says that this story of an 'attempted kidnapping of Richard cannot be preferred to Flodoard and Richer's account of how, in 943, the boy [Richard] was brought to Lewis (Louis), granted his father's "province" by the king, and left in his care'. P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, pp. 288, 290, says: 'Les expressions de l'annaliste contemporain [Flodoard] des événements et les témoignages précis, que nous possédons à côté, ne nous paraissent pas permettre d'adopter le récit d'allure poétique du doyen de Saint-Quentin qui écrivait au siècle suivant […]. En ce qui concerne le sort du roi lui-même, il est impossible de croire Dudon.'

[2] Which is very reminiscent of Flodoard's 'a certain Northman who was his faithful man'.

[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 946: *Annales*, p. 101; *Annals*, p. 44.

[4] It is likely that Harald was already at Bayeux in 944 (at least). P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, p. 123, n. 3, remarks: 'Le fait qu'Hagrold demanda au roi, en 945, une entrevue, et la confiance avec Louis s'y rendit peuvent faire supposer que Louis et Hagrold se connaissaient déjà.'

of Reims' description of the battle in 943 in which Louis IV defeated the newly arrived pagan king Setric.[1] The parallels are very striking.

According to Richer of Reims, Louis IV only had a few men with him (*cum paucis*) to face Setric, while Dudo also has Richard fighting Theobald with 'a few men' (*cum paucis*). Richer has the battle in 943 opening with Louis's men advancing against Setric with 'his army packed tightly together', 'densata agmine procedit'. Next, according to Richer, the pagans 'first' advanced and 'hurled their swords at the outset', 'Propinquantesque patrio more in primo tumultu enses iaciunt', Then, secondly, 'thinking the king's knights had been frightened and injured by the dense fire, they pressed the attack with shields and spears', 'Quorum densitate equites territos ac sauciatos rati, cum clipeis et telis prosecuntur'. Dudo has two waves of attack as well. In the 'first' attack Richard fought Theobald with shortened throwing-spears and lances, in the 'second' with shining swords, 'In primo quidem congress, praeliabantur decurtatis telis et lanceis; secundo vero mucroninbus coruscis'. In addition, Richer has the battle in 943 opening with Louis's men advancing against Setric with 'his army packed tightly together' (*densata agmine procedit*), and later his cavalry, who were crowding together (*ac densati*), charging the Northmen, while Dudo has Richard's Northmen advancing 'with shields overlapping and locked together' (*conjunctis complicatisque ad invicem clypeis*), and then his cavalry riding over the 'close-packed formation' (*condenssum agmen obstantium*) of Theobald's men. Furthermore, in the battle that took place in 943, when Setric's men were being slaughtered by Louis's horsemen 'King Setric took flight, but he was discovered hiding in a thicket', 'Regem quoque Setrich cum violentia belli in fugam cogeret, in dumeto mox repertus [...]', and killed. In Dudo's story when Theobald's men were losing the fight they fled; some of them ended up hiding in 'thickets made dense by interwoven bushes', (*Alii lucis concretione fruticum condense*). Theobald himself also took a 'very rapid flight with a few men' (*fugae expertiit auxilium cum paucis velocius*). In the 943 battle Setric was killed although 'a very few' (*paucissimi*) of the survivors managed to escape. Finally, Richer says that in the battle in 943 some of King Louis's men had been 'struck down and some wounded' and 'after attending to them he made arrangements to return home'- entrusting Rouen to count Herluin before he went on to Compiègne. Similarly, Dudo has Richard going to Rouen but returning the next morning to the battlefield, where he felt much pity for the (his) dead and had them buried, and he had the wounded carried to Rouen on litters and healed. He also searched the

[1] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chap. 35, pp. 242-43.

'thickets and bogs', where he found many (enemy) 'dead and wounded', and 'he attended to them with the same dutifulness'.

The parallels between the descriptions of the two battles are abundantly apparent.[1] Richer wrote his *Histories* in the 990s when Dudo was supposedly just starting his own work. Henri Prentout said that Richer of Reims 'could have served' as Dudo's model.[2] When discussing Dudo's inspiration and sources, and in particular the works of Aimoin of Fleury and Richer of Reims, Eric Christiansen says 'I cannot prove that [Dudo] knew either work. There are no incontestable borrowings, but there are too many points of similarity and empathy for the possibility of interdependence to be dismissed'.[3] I think the foregoing similarity is just one example of this. Richer was writing in the 990s, and his own father Rodulf had been an important vassal (*miles*) of Louis IV and even one of the king's closest advisers and military tacticians. It is in fact quite possible that Rodulf had been involved in King Louis's battle with Setric and Turmold, or at least that he had heard about it from Louis himself or from someone else present. Richer states that his father had devised the plan for Louis to retake Laon from Hugh the Great in 949 and engineered the capture of Mons seven years later.[4]

Overall, when this is coupled with the earlier analysis of Dudo's likely borrowings from several of Flodoard's *Annals* for the years 943-945 for his concocted story of the so-called Norman War, we might want to question whether Dudo's tale contains any grain of historical truth over and above what Flodoard had written about the years 961-962. Indeed, except for the Northmen's one victory over Theobald in 962 was there really any extensive 'Norman War' at all? Eric Christiansen questions whether these particular stories told by Dudo of Saint-Quentin ever 'actually occurred'.[5]

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[1] Some of the more 'legendary' elements of this battle appear in some of Richer's other stories, see for example the story of the fight between King Odo and Catillus: Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 1, chaps. 8-9, pp. 27-33. Also see Philippe Lauer's discussion in his *Le règne de Louis IV*, pp. 99-101 and Appendice II, 'Les sources légendaires de Richer', VI, pp. 272-75.

[2] H. Prentout, *Essai sur les origines et la fondation du duché de Normandie* (Caen, 1911), p. 150.

[3] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. xx and n. 35. According to P. Bauduin (pers. comm): 'Il n'est pas certain (et il est même peu probable) que Dudon ait connu l'oeuvre de Richer donc qu'il l'ait copiée (cf. *La première Normandie*, p. 81, n. 91), même si les deux auteurs ont pu fréquenter le même milieu.'

[4] Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 1, book 2, chaps. 87-90, pp. 353-61; vol. 2, book 3, chaps. 7-10, pp. 10-15. Richer's father could also have been Louis's vassal Rodulf who held the castle of Clastres (dep. Aisne, arr. Saint-Quentin) which was besieged by the sons of Herbert II of Vermandois in 944 according to Flodoard. See Flodoard *s.a.* 944: *Annals*, p. 39; *Annales*, p. 92 and n. 1; P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, p. 113 and n. 5.

[5] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 220, n. 412.

The cause of the fight between Theobald and Richard

What was the cause of the confrontation between Theobald and Richard I in 962? Or, if Dudo's stories are to be believed at all, the cause of a more extensive Norman War?

It is most unlikely that Richard's Northmen were responsible for the attacks on coastal Brittany and Nantes, and thus we can confidently exclude Ferdinand Lot's suggestion that Richard and Theobald were competing for Breton lands,[1] or as Pierre Bauduin puts it: 'La raison du conflit est peut-être à rechercher dans les affaires de Bretagne.'[2] Dudo presents Theobald as being 'inflamed by malevolent rage (*novercalibus furiis*), and by jealousy and hatred' of Richard. Looking for possible reasons for this historians have suggested his rage and hatred could have been stirred up by Richard's stepmother Liégeard.[3] Sometime after William Longsword's death in 942 his wife Liégeard of Vermandois had married Theobald of Blois.[4] Although it is nowhere said, Bauduin, following Dudo, suggests that 'la haine de Thibaud à l'égard du comte de Rouen aurait été excitée par sa femme, Liégeard, belle-mère de Richard (*novercalibus furiis*)'.[5] There is, however, no real evidence for this conjecture.[6]

A variant on this theory could be that Liégeard was involved but not by her stirring hatred in Theobald but rather in pushing Theobald (if he needed to be) to keep or even retake the territories she had received as her dower (*douaire*) when she had married William Longsword. The dower included a rich domain at Longueville near Vernon on the Seine and two properties in the Évrecin at Coudres and Illiers-l'Évêque.[7] These properties had certainly later reverted to Norman control. According to Pierre Bauduin, 'L'union [of Theobald and Liégeard] avait apporté à Thibaud des biens qui avaient autrefois appartenu au comte de Rouen et servi à établir le douaire de Liégeard. Le comte de Blois a pu revendiquer des droits tenus par son épouse en

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[1] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 356: 'Vers année 959, pour des causes assez obscures, probablement les affaires de Bretagne, le comte Thibaud le Tricheur, puis le roi Lothaire et Brunon, archevêque de Cologne, prennent une attitude hostile à l'égard de Richard Ier, duc de Normandie.'

[2] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 169. Bauduin is now of the opinion that these two things should not be linked, see the communication in the summary of this chapter.

[3] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 347, says that Dudo's assertion that Theobald's hostility towards Richard was provoked by *Leudegarde* is 'reasonable' but incomplete. He prefers the 'Breton affairs' theory; indeed he is the source of this theory for many later historians.

[4] The only annalist or chronicler who mentions this marriage is the Burgundian monk Ralph Glaber in his twelfth-century work *Historiarum libri quinque ab anno incarnationis DCCCC usque ad annum MXLIV* (see *Histoires de Raoul Glaber*, ed. and trans. M. Arnoux (Turnhout, 1997), III, 39, pp. 214-16).

[5] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 169.

[6] Bauduin's highlighting of the term *novercalibus furiis* used by Dudo (ed. Lair, p. 265) is because the adjective *novercalis* which in Dudo's text may mean something like 'malevolent rage', and is so translated by Eric Christiansen, can also sometimes mean (of the) stepmother. See E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 218, n. 400.

[7] P. Bauduin, 'Du bon usage de la *dos* dans la Normandie ducale (X^{e}-début XIIe siècle)' in F. Bougard, L. Feller and R. Le Jan (eds.), *Dots et douaires dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Ecole Française de Rome, 2002), pp. 429-465, at p. 438.

Normandie'.[1] Perhaps the clash reported by Flodoard in 962 involved Richard trying to take back these properties. Maybe he was resisted by Theobald but prevailed? Perhaps the whole 'Norman War' was as simple as that? But perhaps it was not so simple.

Another place we might look for the (or a) cause of the conflict between Theobald and Richard (which I would stress I do not deny happened) is perhaps simply the count of Blois wishing to hold on to or regain some north-eastern possessions he had been given and enjoyed when Hugh the Great was still alive.[2] Theobald's involvement with Hugh north-east of the Seine went back to at least early 945.[3] Later the same year after Hugh had got his hands on Louis IV the king was handed over to Theobald who held him as a prisoner for nearly a year until Hugh was pressured to free him, but only after receiving the great royal *castrum* of Laon from Queen Gerberga in return, a town and fortification Hugh then immediately committed to Theobald.[4] Theobald was still in possession of Laon in 948 and because of this the Frankish bishops excommunicated him.[5] Louis tried to take back Laon the next year. He was partially successful; his men took the *oppidum* but Theobald's men still held the tower of the *castrum*. Hugh sent reinforcements to Theobald (including some Northmen) as well as much-needed supplies.[6] Then, despite having sent a message to Louis seeking peace, Hugh 'suddenly attacked Laon in an effort to take the city'.[7] It was only in 950 after Louis had sought and got the help of his uncle, the German king Otto, that Hugh (and hence Theobald) returned the tower of Laon to the king.[8] But in fact Theobald's association with the castle of Coucy in the Aisne goes back to 949 when it was 'handed over' to Archbishop Artald by the men holding it for 'Count Hugh' the Great and Count 'Theobald' of Blois.[9] In 950 King Louis IV met with Hugh the Great (again) and after the meeting was concluded the garrison of Coucy, which had deserted Archbishop Artald, received Count Theobald into the *castrum*. Louis was angered by this and asked Hugh to hand over the *munitio* to him. 'But Count Theobald put up great resistance and Louis was not able to obtain it.'[10] Then Theobald expelled many of Coucy's inhabitants.[11] It

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[1] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 169.
[2] P. Bauduin (pers. comm): 'Sur la volonté de regagner des possessions au nord-est du royaume : Thibaud a épousé Liégeard de Vermandois, fille d'Herbert II. Or l'essentiel des possessions de la Maison de Vermandois sont au nord ou à l'est de la Seine. Herbert et Robert sont ses beaux-frères et Dudon a été au service d'Albert de Vermandois, frère de Liégeard.'
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 945: *Annales*, p. 95-97; *Annals*, p. 41.
[4] Flodoard *s.a.* 945-946: *Annales*, pp. 98-101; *Annals*, pp. 42-44.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 948: *Annales*, p. 116; *Annals*, p. 50.
[6] Flodoard *s.a.* 949: *Annales*, p. 124; *Annals*, p. 53.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] Flodoard *s.a.* 950: *Annales*, pp. 126-27; *Annals*, p. 54.
[9] Flodoard *s.a.* 949: *Annales*, p. 124 *Annals*, p. 53.
[10] Flodoard *s.a.* 950: *Annales*, p. 128; *Annals*, p. 55.
[11] *Ibid.*

seems that Theobald was still holding the town almost a decade later. In or before 958 Theobald had committed the stronghold of Coucy to his subject Harduin, but in 958 some of the *fideles* of the previous lord of the place, Archbishop Artold, captured the *castrum* in a surprise attack. Harduin and his men fled to the citadel (tower).[1] Flodoard says that 'King Lothar and Lord Artoldus and many other bishops and counts' came to Coucy to try to capture it. They besieged the stronghold for two weeks without success. However, Lothar accepted two of Harduin's nephews as hostages and raised the siege. Theobald then arrived but 'was not received there', doubtless meaning that Harduin had renounced his fealty to Theobald in favour of Lothar. So, Theobald returned home, plundering the *pagi* of Laon and Soissons as he went. Some of his men even took the *munitio* of La Fère (near Laon), but Lothar arrived and managed to get Theobald to order them out through the mediation of the brothers Herbert and Robert, two of the sons of Herbert II Count of Vermandois.[2]

Following Hugh the Great's death in 956, Theobald had used the minority of Hugh's son Hugh Capet to take the counties of Chartres and Châteaudun and 'brutally imposed his authority by the construction of donjons at Blois, Chinon, Chartres and Châteaudun'.[3] Bauduin says that although Theobald had doubtless given homage to Hugh Capet for Chartres and Châteaudun he had still interposed himself between the new *dux Francorum* (Hugh) and the viscounts of these two *pagi* who had until then been direct vassals of the Robertian.[4] Theobald had extended his presence 'north-eastwards' (within Neustria between the Loire and the Seine), while Hugh Capet's 'Robertian' duchy had shrunk to 'autour d'un axe Orléans-Paris-Senlis'.[5] According to Pierre Bauduin the emergence of these new powers between the Seine and the Loire could not but have profound repercussions for 'Normandy',[6] a point to which we will return.

The relevance of this to the cause of the 'Norman War' is that in 958 relations between the Carolingian king Lothar and Theobald of Blois were very bad indeed. But in 960 Lothar and the Robertian Hugh Capet were reconciled. Hugh and his brother Odo with the mediation of their uncle Archbishop Bruno of Cologne became Lothar's men and the king invested Hugh as *dux Francorum*, like his father, and 'gave him the *pagus* of Poitou that his father had held'.[7] In the same year (possibly just before) Hugh's sister Emma had married Richard I. We do not

[1] Flodoard *s.a.* 958: *Annales*, pp. 144-45; *Annals*, pp. 62-63.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 167, my translation. This land grab took place between 956 and 960 (*ibid.*).
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.* For a discussion of the expansion and later shrinkage of Hugh's vast 'duchy' both before and after his death see Y. Sassier, *Hugh Capet*; F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*; P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*.
[6] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p .167.
[7] Flodoard *s.a.* 960: *Annales*, pp. 148-49; *Annals*, p. 65.

know what Theobald's position was in this year of 960. Was he too at peace with King Lothar, Hugh Capet and even Richard of Rouen?[1] Or had perhaps Hugh's investiture unsettled him? Whatever the case, Richard was clearly not close to Lothar the next year because he disrupted the assembly Lothar was holding at Soissons and was chased away. In 962 Theobald had been defeated by some Northmen, Richard's if we are to believe the canon of Saint-Quentin, a defeat Theobald considered due to the fact that his lord Hugh Capet was hostile to him, so he went to the Carolingians Gerberga and Lothar who only consoled him but did not give him any real help. Regarding Theobald's position and loyalties, without really addressing the question of the cause or causes of the 'Norman War', various historians suggest that the war itself precipitated a reversal of alliances. Yves Sassier interprets Theobald's going to meet Gerberga and Lothar as being the point when he changed his alliance from his traditional loyalty to the Robertians to the Carolingians, which was for Hugh Capet 'un catastrophe majeure',[2] and that 'la guerre normande a engendré, entre Lothaire et le comte de Blois, une complicité qui ne cessera par la suite de renforcer, notamment avec le propre fils de Thibaud, Eudes Ier'.[3] Rosamond McKitterick states: 'Because he had fallen out with Hugh Capet, Theobald count of Blois, nick-named the Trickster, became a vassal of King Lothar', adding rightly that later 'Theobald's loyalty to Lothar was somewhat ambivalent (he fully lived up to his nickname)'.[4] While Pierre Bauduin says: 'Not fully breaking with Hugh Capet, Theobald of Blois and his Vermandois allies became the most firm supporters of the Carolingian king Lothar.'[5]

The prevalent assumption of Theobald becoming a loyal vassal of Lothar in about *c*.962 is obviously based on Flodoard's report that in that year when Theobald had suffered a reverse at the hands of the Northmen he had gone to Lothar and his mother and only been 'consoled' by them. However, Theobald's subsequent actions might suggest otherwise. Theobald seems to have been obsessed with retaking the fortress of Coucy because in 964 the new archbishop of Reims Adalric (*Odelricus*) excommunicated him as he had 'improperly obtained the *castrum* of Coucy-le-Château, which he was now obstinately holding, along with certain estates belonging to [the monastery of] St-Remi [at Reims]'.[6] We do not know when and how Theobald

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[1] See P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 170, n. 121: 'Nous ignorons à peu près tout de la situation normande entre 956 et 960 : quelles furent les conséquences de la vacance de l'Etat robertien pour la principauté normande ? La suzeraineté robertienne sur la principauté rouennaise était-elle revendiquée par le roi ? Comment interpréter le *ego vindicabo totam Northmannicam regionem* (Dudon, p. 273) qu'adresse Thibaud à Lothaire ?'
[2] Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, p. 151.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms and the Carolingians* (Harlow, 1983), p. 322.
[5] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 167, my translation. See also K. F. Werner, 'L'acquisition par la maison de Blois des comtés de Chartres et de Châteaudun', in *Mélanges de numismatique, d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à Jean Lafaurie* (Paris, 1980), pp. 265-72, at pp. 270-71; Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, p. 151.
[6] Flodoard *s.a*. 964: *Annales*, p. 155; *Annals*, p. 67.

retook Coucy from those loyal to Archbishop Adalric. Herbert and Robert, two of the sons of Herbert II of Vermandois, were also attacking and seizing towns in the area belonging to Reims (including Châlons and Épernay and other *villae*).[1] But when Adalric asked for their return this was done and 'without hesitation' and Herbert gained Adalric's friendship.[2] The next year (965) Adalric retook Épernay from Herbert and Coucy from Theobald and they both had their excommunications lifted.[3] This is the last we hear of Theobald because Flodoard died shortly thereafter. The relevance is that Archbishop Adalric was a man loyal to King Lothar,[4] who had agreed to his election in late 962 (just after Theobald's defeat by the Northmen), an election in which Flodoard himself participated.[5] Thus in retaking Coucy in or somewhat before 964 Theobald certainly does not seem to have been a newly converted and faithful vassal of Lothar, because Coucy was a possession of the archdiocese of Reims and Adalric had excommunicated Theobald over his 'improper' acquisition of the town. When Theobald gave Coucy back to Reims, Adalric gave the *castrum* to Theobald's (unnamed) son[6] 'who had committed himself to the bishop', implying that Theobald had not wanted to so commit.[7]

Not wanting to read too much into this sparse record, it might be suggested that Theobald had been abandoned or marginalised by both the Robertian Hugh Capet and the Carolingian king Lothar and in the first half of the 960s he was loyal to no one and was just buccaneering in north-eastern Francia, suffering a reverse somewhere[8] at the hands of certain Northmen and then for some reason continuing his obsession with the fortress of Coucy with which his association went back to 949 when he was a loyal man of Hugh the Great. Thus, we must ask why (according to Dudo) had Lothar and Theobald formed a deadly plot against Richard of Rouen in the first years of the 960s? And particularly why were the two apparently so reconciled that Lothar took the city of Évreux in 962 at the request of Theobald and then gave it to him? Such a dramatic and sudden shift in inner-Frankish political positions and power relationships makes no sense. Recognising this Pierre Bauduin conjectures that perhaps the royal intervention (by Lothar) to capture Évreux might have happened in 960, before Hugh's investiture by Lothar.

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[1] This was all connected with the long-running battle for the incumbency of the archdiocese of Reims, reported at length by Flodoard.
[2] Flodoard *s.a.* 964: *Annales*, p. 155; *Annals*, p. 67.
[3] Flodoard *s.a.* 965: *Annales*, p. 156; *Annals*, pp. 67-68.
[4] Adalric was a canon of Metz and a friend of Archbishop Bruno who pressed for his appointment against Hugh Capet who wanted a restoration of Hugh of Vermandois (another son of Hugh II). For the context see Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet*, pp. 150-53.
[5] Flodoard *s.a.* 962: *Annales*, pp. 153-54; *Annals*, pp. 66-67.
[6] This was Odo the future count of Blois and Chartres.
[7] Flodoard *s.a.* 965: *Annales*, p. 156; *Annals*, p. 68.
[8] As mentioned earlier, Flodoard gives no location for the clash or skirmish in 962 between Theobald and a group of 'Northmen'.

He even muses that maybe Lothar had delayed the cession of Évreux to Theobald (until 962). But perhaps because he still believes in the veracity of Dudo's story of how Évreux was captured by Lothar, Bauduin ultimately cannot explain why or how Lothar and Theobald were so quickly reconciled, and he then somewhat discards his own conjecture by saying that it 'contradicts Dudo's testimony'.[1] One way out of this conundrum is to suggest, as has been done earlier, that Dudo's story of the taking of Évreux and its later granting to Richard I did not actually happen at all. Against this Bauduin remarks that, 'Ce n'est pas si simple, visiblement il existait d'autres traditions indépendantes de Dudon, dont se fait l'écho Guillaume de Jumièges […] : la trahison de Gilbert Machel qui livre Évreux au roi'.[2]

In summary, whatever the truth on the matter of Évreux and whatever the precise reason or reasons for the outbreak of a fight between Richard and Theobald it is clear that much of Dudo's telling of it derives from various reports by Flodoard, not only of events in 961 and 962 but also of real historical events that happened in the first half of the 940s. Whilst I do not deny that there was indeed a fight between these two men, I do not think it amounted to a five-year or more 'Norman War'. Let us now turn to the oft-contended link between the 'Norman War' and events in Brittany.

The connection of the 'Norman War' with the attacks on Brittany and Nantes

The Norman tradition starting with Dudo of Saint-Quentin presents Richard by the 950s and early 960s as an all-powerful leader, and Theobald of Blois as some rather pesky 'satrap' who was jealous of him and would not accept his supposed lordship in large parts of Gaul.

This is a travesty of the true situation. Éric Van Torhoudt has argued that Theobald was trying to continue the policy of his lord Hugh the Great, the *dux Francorum*, to contain the Northmen of Rouen, although he might also have wanted to get rid of them once and for all, as had Louis IV in earlier times. Theobald was a very powerful and ambitious Frankish magnate. He was first granted Brittany in trust by Alan Barbe-Torte before Alan's death in 952, and after Hugh's death in 956 he had managed to extend his territories from Blois and Tours by seizing Hugh's Neustrian counties of Chartres and Châteaudun. If we are to believe the chronicler of Nantes, he built fortifications (*turres*=towers/donjons) financed from the revenues he could

[1] Cf. P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie,* p. 170.
[2] Personal communication. Bauduin also says: 'Je pense quand même la guerre entre Richard et Thibaud a vraiment eu lieu, même si Flodoard est très allusif et si elle ne s'est pas déroulée de la façon dont l'a décrite Dudon […]. Pour moi quelle qu'ait été la raison immédiate du conflit, l'un des enjeux est le contrôle de l'Evrecin, qui est à la frontière entre les deux principautés.'

extract from his share in the town of Nantes: at Blois, Chinon and Chartres.[1] This was all a part of various Frankish magnates' efforts to claim or grab shares of Hugh the Great's massive inheritance. On the other hand, Richard of Rouen until now appears to have been a rather irritating bit player whose usefulness for the Franks had vanished and whose sell-by date in their eyes might finally have arrived. Whatever the precise dating of the incursion of Theobald into Richard's territory, a fight had clearly broken out between him and Richard and the Northmen had gained one solitary victory over Theobald in 962, although there is no evidence at all that this victory happened near Rouen as Dudo says it did.

But the question which must still be addressed is: What evidence is there, even of a circumstantial nature, that the Norman War had any connection with the Northmen's attacks on Brittany and Nantes in the last years of the 950s? There is none.

Whether Theobald was motivated by jealously or malice, as Dudo would have it, or was trying to hold on to his wife Liégeard's dowry, or whether he was just trying to take over some of Hugh's former realm and extend his territory into lands contested by the Rouen Northmen in 962, as we might perhaps infer from Flodoard's brief reports and the geopolitical context, except for Theobald's fight with the Northmen in 962 and his earlier involvement in Brittany and on the Loire from the 950s, there is no evidence that the so-called Norman War and the earlier attacks on Brittany and Nantes were in any way directly linked. The Rouen-based Northmen had had no major involvement in Brittany throughout the early decades of the century whatever Dudo would have us believe, and they certainly exercised real no authority or suzerainty there. Why, therefore, should this small and still apparently rather beleaguered Scandinavian foundation suddenly decide to take its precious fleet away from the Seine for some years in the 950s to make attacks all along the Breton coasts culminating in a major attack on southerly city of Nantes in about 959? This makes no sense given the geopolitical situation in Neustria and Brittany at the time. What could they have hoped to achieve? The direct link made by historians between the attack on Nantes and the Norman War must be questioned, and in my view probably discarded. This even applies to the more nuanced words of Jean-Christophe Cassard that the Northmen who attacked Brittany and Nantes were 'a group of pirates acting more or less for the account of the *duc* of Normandy', which is just a conjecture.

[1] *La chronique de* Nantes, ed. Merlet, chap. 37, p. 108 and n. 4; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie,* p. 167. The *Chronicle of Nantes* only mentions the construction of these towers at the three places noted above, but another was likely built at Châteaudun. In an eleventh-century poem we find complaints of the clergy of Chartres and Châteaudun about the *turres altae* that Theobald had built (see *Chroniques des églises d'Anjou*, eds. Marchegay and Mabille, pp. 247-52).

Where did the Nantes Northmen come from and go to?

If the Northmen who attacked Brittany and Nantes were not Richard's 'Normans' of Rouen this begs the questions of who they were and where they had come from. Unfortunately, the paucity of our sources will probably never allow a definitive answer. Nevertheless, there are some avenues or possibilities that can be tentatively explored.

In an earlier article some possible connections between the Scandinavians of York and the appearances of various Northmen in northern Francia and Brittany between 943 and 945 were examined.[1] It was there suggested that the 'pagan king Setric' (ON Sigtryggr) and his associate *dux* Turmold who had arrived on the Seine in 943 a little after the murder of William Longsword on the Somme in late 942, and who were killed fighting Louis IV's mounted forces, could well have come from York or from the wider English Danelaw, although a Danish origin is also possible.[2] Similarly the Northmen from 'over the sea' who fought with and massacred the Bretons around Dol in 944 possibly had a similar Insular origin as too might, though less likely, 'Harald of Bayeux' who was already established as the commander of Bayeux by 945. Some of these arrivals in northern Francia in the first half of the 940s were probably connected with the efforts of the English king Edmund to expel the Northmen from the Danish 'Five Boroughs' and from Northumbria in the very early 940s, an enterprise which culminated in Edmund annexing all Northumbria and causing the flight of the Scandinavian 'kings' and cousins Anlaf Sihtricson (bynamed Cuarán, ON Óláfr Sigtryggsson) and Ragnall Guthfrithson (ON Rögnvaldr Guðrøðsson) from York in 944.[3] But this expulsion was not quite the end of the Scandinavians' on-and-off control of York. In 946 King Edmund was murdered, probably for political reasons.[4] He was succeeded by his half-brother Eadred. It should be remembered Edmund's half-brother and predecessor King Æthelstan had been instrumental in the return of King Louis IV in 936. Flodoard of Reims reported Edmund's death in the following terms: 'Edmundus rex Transmarinus defungitur, uxor quoque regis Othonis, soror ipsius Edmundi, decessit', 'Edmund, king across the sea, died, and the wife of King Otto, sister of the same Edmund, died also.'[5] As has repeatedly been pointed out in earlier chapters, the term *transmarinus* or similar in ninth- and tenth-century Frankish sources always seems to mean the

[1] See S. M. Lewis, 'Death on the Seine'.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] *ASC D s.a.* 944, ed. Cubbin: 'Her Eadmund cyning geeode eall Norðhymbra land him to gewealde, 7 aflymde twegen cyningas, Anlaf Sihtrices [*Syhtrices* in MS A] sunu, 7 Regnald Guðferþes sunu.'
[4] K. Halloran, 'A Murder at Pucklechurch: The Death of King Edmund, 26 May 946', *Midland History*, 40. 1 (2015), pp. 120-29.
[5] D. Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents c. 500–1042*, 2nd edn (London, 1979), p. 345.

British Isles. This is just another clear example of this usage. Either just before or just after King Edmund's death a chieftain called Eric (ON Eiríkr) managed to take control of York.[1] But his first tenure in the city was short-lived because in 948 the new English king Eadred raided across Northumbria because 'they had taken Eric for their king' and he burned the minster at Ripon. Eric had not been killed because at the time he was 'within York'. Eric's Northmen managed to cut off Eadred's army or rearguard as it was on its way home to Wessex and they inflicted a 'great slaughter' on the English at Castleford (West Yorkshire). Eadred was so angered by this that he wanted to invade Northumbria again, but the council (or *witan*) of Northumbria heard of this and 'abandoned Eric and compensated King Eadred for the act'.[2] Where Eric then went is unknown. But by 949 Anlaf Cuarán (Óláfr Sigtryggson) had returned to York from Ireland where he had been involved in a struggle with his cousin Blácaire Guthfrithson (ON Blakari Guðrøðsson) for control of Dublin.[3] When Blacaire died in 948 fighting the forces of Conghalach Cnoghbha, the High King of Ireland, Anlaf's hold on Dublin was secure and he could safely return to Northumbria leaving his brother Guthfrith Sihtricson (ON Guðrøðr Sigtryggsson) in control of Dublin.[4] Anlaf remained in control of York until 952 when Eric returned.[5] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says that in 952 'the Northumbrians drove out King Anlaf and accepted Eric, son of Harald', 'Her Norðhymbre fordrifan Anlaf cyning 7 underfengon Yric Haroldes sunu'.[6] Eric himself did not last long after his reinstatement at York because in 954 the Northumbrians drove him out as well and King Eadred succeeded to the kingdom of Northumbria ('Her Norðhymbre fordrifon Yric, 7 Ædred feng to Norðhymbra rice').[7] The only English report of the fate of Eric is in Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* which states that he was killed in a fight at Stainmore (in Westmorland in western Northumbria): 'King Eilric, by treachery of earl Oswulf, was slain by a nobleman called Macon,

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[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 112-13; *eadem*, 'Eric Bloodaxe - axed? The Mystery of the Last Viking King of York', *Mediaeval Scandinavia*, 14 (2004), pp. 51-77. Cf. A. Woolf, 'Eric Bloodaxe revisited', *Northern History*, 34 (1998), pp. 189-93, at p. 190.

[2] *ASC D s.a.* 948, ed. Cubbin: 'Her Eadred cyning oferhergode eall Norðhymbra land, for þæm þe hi hæfdon genumen him Yryc to cyninge, 7 þa on þære hergunge wæs þæt mære mynster forbærnd æt Rypon þæt Sancte Wilferð getimbrede. 7 þa se cyning hamweard wæs, þa offerde se here innan Heoforwic, wæs þæs cynges fyrde hindan æt Ceasterforda, 7 þær mycel wæl geslogon. Ða wearð se cyning swa gram þæt he wolde eft in fyrdian 7 þone eard mid ealle fordon. Þa Norðhymbra witan þæt ongeaton, þa forlæton hi Hyryc 7 wið Eadred cyning gebeton þa dæde'; *ASC D s.a.* 948, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 112.

[3] *ASC E s.a.* 949, ed. Irvine: 'Her com Anlaf Cwiran on Norðhymbra land'; trans. Swanton, p. 113. Irish annals have him leaving for England in 948: *Annals Clonmacnoise s.a.* 943[= 948], ed. Murphy, p. 154; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 113.

[4] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 47, 113.

[5] He may have returned briefly to Dublin in 951, see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 113, n. 35.

[6] *ASC E s.a.* 952, ed. Irvine; ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 113. For some of the machinations in York at this time see C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 113-15. Anlaf had a long subsequent career in Ireland and did not die until 980.

[7] *ASC E s.a.* 954: ed. Irvine; ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 113.

together with his son Henry and his brother Reginald, in a lonely spot called *Steinmore*; after which king Eadred reigned in these parts.'[1] Clare Downham puts it as follows: 'This "desolate spot" lay on a main route following the old Roman road from York to the Irish-Sea coast. If these assertions [of Roger of Wendover] have any substance, they could imply that Eiríkr was trying to reach a base near the Irish Sea when he died.'[2] This is not the place to explore who Eric of York was, although in my opinion he is unlikely to have been 'Eric Bloodaxe', the son of the Norwegian king Harald Finehair, or even the son of Danish king Harald Bluetooth, as many earlier historians have suggested based in large part on late and unreliable Norse sagas and legends.[3] What is of importance for our purposes it that Eric's removal was the final end of Scandinavian control of Northumbian York.

After the English takeover of Northumbria we see in the records 'a degree of territorial appropriation which may have prompted the departure of some leading figures from the region'.[4] Clare Downham suggests 'some' of these Scandinavians 'may have sought fortunes in other viking colonies'.[5] Perhaps, she says, some went to the Isle of Man,[6] whilst 'other emigrants may have travelled to Normandy'.[7] With regard to this last suggestion, Downham refers to the fact that Hugh of Fleury states that *Deirans* were among the 'auxiliary troops' of Richard I in 962, a subject I will discuss at some length a little later.[8] Whilst there certainly may be a connection between the emigration of some Scandinavian forces from Northumbria after 954 and the *Deiran* Northumbrians supposedly on the Seine in the early 960s there is quite a gap between these events. However, the raids on the coasts of Brittany culminating in the attack on Nantes actually took place over a period of years in the second half of the 950s and thus immediately following the final expulsion of the Scandinavians from York.[9] It is not out of the question that the Northmen who attacked Brittany and then Nantes had in fact come from Northumbrian York. If Hugh of Fleury's mention of Deirans being amongst the Danish

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[1] Roger of Wendover: *Rogeri de Wendover Chronica, sives Flores historianum*, ed. H. O. Coxe, 4 vols (London, 1841-42), vol. 1, p. 402; *Roger of Wendover's Flowers of History, comprising the History of England from the Descent of the Saxons to A.D. 1235*, trans. J. A. Giles, 2 vols (London, 1849), vol. 1, p. 256.
[2] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 121.
[3] For one opinion about Eric's possible identity see C. Downham, *Viking Kings,* pp. 115-20; *eadem*, 'Eric Bloodaxe - axed?; *eadem*, 'The Chronology'; A. Woolf, 'Eric Bloodaxe revisited', pp. 189-93.
[4] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 121.
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] *Ibid*.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 122.
[8] Although C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 122, rightly says that the 'use of the name Deirans is unusual at this date and needs to be questioned'.
[9] I am not suggesting all the York/Northumbrian Northmen left, obviously they did not.

‘auxiliaries’ Dudo says Richard I called in has any independent historical worth then it might also imply that after attacking Nantes the Northmen had then moved on to the Seine.

Finally, as will be shown later, at least as far as Dudo of Saint-Quentin’s novel-like account is concerned there does seem to have been a connection between the Northmen who had supposedly come to the Seine (in *c*.962) and the independent Northmen of Coutances and the Cotentin.

Dudo’s story of Richard I’s Danish helpers

One possible connection of the Scandinavians attacking Brittany and Nantes in the late 950s could be with the supposed auxiliaries or mercenaries Dudo says were called in by Richard I to help him fight Theobald of Blois and the other Franks supposedly trying to destroy both him and the Northmen of what was to become Normandy.[1]

Could it be that these Northmen arriving on the Seine, supposedly in the early 960s, may have arrived after having undertaken the raids on Brittany and Nantes in the late 950s?

It should be stressed again that Dudo and his later followers are the only ‘evidence’ for the presence of Northmen in West Francia at this time. Rather inexplicably they are not mentioned by Flodoard in his *Annals* which are our only reliable source for the facts of these years, nor even by Richer of Reims or Ralph Glaber. Eric Christiansen correctly says, ‘there is no evidence other than Dudo’s of any Danish raids on northern France about this time’.[2] Putting this issue to one side for the moment, Dudo states that after Richard had won a victory over Theobald near Rouen:

> The great duke Richard speedily dispatched envoys from his household to Dacia so that the most-sturdy nation of the Dacians (*gens robustissima Dacorum*) should hasten to his aid. And the Dacians are delighted by these embassies, and when they have rapidly fitted out ships and loaded them, they make for Rouen without delay. And when the most constant duke beheld the chiefs of so great a multitude, and sought of his own rage and indignation to take vengeance on the malevolence shown him, he ordered them to make for Jeufosse and lay waste all that belonged to Theobald and the king.[3]

[1] Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges never actually use any word which might mean auxiliaries or mercenaries. In fact, the term ‘auxiliaries’ is only found in Hugh of Fleury’s early twelfth-century *Liber modernorum regum*.
[2] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 221, n. 424.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 276-77; trans. Christiansen, pp. 150-51.

The Vermandois clerk clearly had no idea who these *gens robustissima Dacorum* were, probably because Flodoard, who was his primary source for these years, does not mention a single word about them. Dudo sometimes uses the word Dacians to refer to groups of Scandinavians who were not the Northmen of the future 'Normandy'. He occasionally glosses the expressions Dacians or Northmen by saying that they were 'Danes', but this in no way implies that they came from Denmark. In his much-condensed rendition of Dudo's tales[1] William of Jumièges has Richard sending messengers to Harald, king of the Danes (*Heroldo Danorum regi legatos dirigit*) requesting his help to repress the fury of the Franks with a host of heathens. Harald was delighted and rewarded the legates with rich gifts and promised to come quickly to Richard's aid. After this we hear of how Harald fitted out his ships, 'crossed the sea' and came to Rouen and then to Jeufosse. There then follows a vivid description, with no specifics given, of the desolation these Northmen caused in Theobald's lands until 'no dog barked'. When there was nothing left to destroy of Theobald's lands the Northmen turned their attention to the lands of the king (Lothar), which they invaded.[2] Of course Dudo says nothing about the leader of these Northmen being Harald; whether deliberately or otherwise William has brought 'Harald of Bayeux' of the 940s and 950s back into the picture.[3]

We ought also to be highly wary and sceptical of Dudo's claim that the 'pagan' Northmen who supposedly came to the Seine came at Richard's request. It is equally possible that these pagans were as Jean Renaud suggests 'une bande de Vikings' whose arrival the 'Normans' had profited from.[4] Perhaps they had even come to the Seine to offer their assistance to the beleaguered Northmen of Rouen, for a significant payment no doubt. But it is just as possible that they had come in the hope of staking a claim to 'Norman' lands and hoping to extend these lands further at the expense of the Franks, as had King Setric in 943. All this, of course, is accepting Dudo's claim that some Northmen actually did come to northern Francia at this time.

The implicit relative chronology of Dudo's story regarding the coming of these supposed auxiliaries places Richard's appeal for support from the *Dacians* after the Northmen's defeat of Theobald in 962, although as discussed earlier Lot (followed by Merlet) argued that this makes little sense and that it is more likely that Richard's call for help happened before Richard's victory, but that the 'Danes' probably only arrived at the end of 962, and only after the winter

[1] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 221, n. 42, notes that whereas Dudo spent ten chapters on these supposed raids on northern Francia at this time 'William of Jumièges merely condensed these ten chapters into two: *GND* 4, 16 and 17'.
[2] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, IV. 16, pp. 126-27.
[3] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, III. 9, pp. 88-91, has Harald first arriving when William Longsword was still alive and installing himself in the Cotentin with William's approval.
[4] J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie*, p. 93.

did they start attacking the lands of Theobald and Lothar. Additionally, Dudo also places both Richard's flight from his enemies (in 961) and his victory over Theobald (in 962) as happening after Theobald had gone to meet Queen Gerberga and King Lothar, however we know from Flodoard that Theobald only went to meet Gerberga and Lothar *after* his defeat by the 'Northmen' in 962. Both of these inconsistancies are further reasons to doubt Dudo's story.

The course of the 'Norman War'

After arriving at Jeufosse, Dudo says that the *Dacians* departed and 'came upon the king and Theobald' and 'they laid waste what they found without distinction'. Villages, towns and castles were burned. Great slaughter ensued and the Frankish survivors were taken aboard the Dacians's ships (as potential slaves or hostasges no doubt). The whole land of the king and of Theobald was laid waste. A famine arose and plague broke out because the land was not being ploughed.[1] Richard's own lands were, however, untouched, and 'every peasant was free to do what he wanted, once he had gained the power of choice'.[2] This ravaging of all of 'Francia', the lands of King Lothar and Theobald, supposedly went on 'for nearly five years'.[3] And during this time there was 'ruin and rapine, night and day, on innumerable occasions, thanks to the Northmen (*Northmannicae*, not Dacians here).[4] Dudo finishes with saying 'and so almost the whole of Francia lying under the rule of Theobald is deserted by inhabitants' and the churches forsaken.[5] This is palpable nonsense. If there had been such massive years-long plundering, destruction and misery, why did Flodoard of Reims, who always mentions events involving or concerning Lothar, Theobald, Richard and other groups of Northmen, say not a single word about it?

The canon of Saint-Quentin continues his tale by claiming that the bishops of the Frankish realm were so alarmed by the savagery of the pagan Northmen, which had lasted nearly five years, that they convoked a holy synod. No place is given. William of Jumièges places it at Laon, although there is no contemporary evidence for any such meeting.[6] Theobald was at this synod too, and he 'deceitfully' told the bishops that he was in dispute with Richard and the 'pagans' out of fealty to the king. But the bishops had heard of the goodness of duke Richard.[7]

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 277; trans. Christiansen, p. 151. There were plagues and famine in Francia in the first half of the 940s but not as far as we know in the 960s. See Flodoard *s.a.* 942, 945: *Annales*, pp. 85, 100; *Annals*, pp. 37, 43.
[2] *Ibid*., Dudo.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, IV. 17, pp. 126-27; E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 222, n. 427.
[7] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 277; trans. Christiansen, p. 151.

Thus they sent the bishop of Chartres to Rouen to talk with Richard.[1] Once there the bishop told Richard that he and his fellow bishops were 'amazed and stupefied that you, who are called a worshipper of God and an outstanding Christian throughout the world, allow pagans to rage cruelly against Christians'. After telling of how, of course, those under Richard's patronage were safe and unafraid, the bishop continues by saying that the Franks 'are worn down with robberies and burnings, and all by sudden death in the night, and we do not know by whose deliberate intention this detestable outrage is being committed upon us'.[2] It seems rather strange, unbelievable even, that all these 'concerns' over 'viking terror'[3] from 962 to 965 (the supposed date of these events) finds no echo in the record, which rather shows that in these years the bishops, Lothar, Theobald and the sons of Herbert II of Vermandois were, to use Eric Christiansen's words, 'busy quarrelling over the castle of Coucy',[4] and indeed over the incumbency of the important archdiocese of Reims.

There then follows a repetition of all the griefs suffered by Richard at the hands of Bruno, Lothar and Theobald. Eventually Richard agrees that he will try to obtain peace from the pagans 'who have invaded here on my account', although he does not know if he will succeed. Richard therefore suggests another meeting in May before which he would: 'try to moderate and repress the insolence and fierce arrogance of the pagans.'[5] When this message was given to the king, to all the bishops and to Theobald, the latter sent a monk to Richard. The monk is presented by Dudo as contrite and he begs forgiveness from Richard for the evil Theobald had done him, which was the result of the 'evil counsel of certain Franks'![6] The monk promises that Theobald will in future commit no further evil. He says that Theobald asks only to meet Richard 'privately' to discuss returning the town of Évreux to him, 'in order to obtain your love'.[7] Finally, after more pleading and contrition on behalf of Theobald, the monk asks Richard to 'restrain the dire incursion of Dacian ferocity'. Richard was much pleased about the offer of Évreux but asked if the offer could be true. To which the monk replies/repeats that Theobald does not want anything in return for giving Évreux back to Richard. He just wants to have Richard's affection and to conclude a peace and treaty with him. The monk then says Theobald

[1] The bishop of Chartres at this time was Vulfald of Fleury, elected in 962 (see Flodoard *s.a.* 962: *Annales*, p. 153; *Annals*, p. 66). It seems highly suspicious that Dudo has the bishop of Chartres coming to meet Richard when the only time when Chartres or its bishop is mentioned by Flodoard is this report of Vulfald's appointment in 962 which comes immediately after his report of Theobald's defeat and flight to Gerberga and Lothar.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 278; trans. Christiansen, p. 152.
[3] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 222, n. 428.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 278; trans. Christiansen, p. 152.
[6] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 279; trans. Christiansen, p. 153.
[7] *Ibid.*

would come 'by night with his confidential advisers [...] as far as the walls of Rouen' to conclude the matter.[1] Richard agrees to this, giving a time of 'after twice three days' for the meeting when they would make a permanent and everlasting agreement. Theobald then came to Rouen with his advisers 'after three times two days'. Dudo adds the nice touch that 'as soon as each (count) caught sight of the other, he ran to meet him, and they embraced and kissed each other',[2] which is quite some *volte-face* for two people who had supposedly hated each other for so long. Dudo then tells us, with more invented dialogue put into both of their mouths, how Theobald was full of contrition and remorse, and that he would give 'back' Évreux to Richard. And so, the two 'entered into an alliance' and embraced and kissed. Theobald then went back 'secretly' to Chartres 'with immense rewards and gifts'.[3] On the same day Theobald's men marched out of Évreux 'just as it had been agreed' and sent a message to Richard that he should take back the town, which he then did and garrisoned it more fully with knights.[4]

Before looking at how Dudo says Richard eventually got the pagan Northmen to leave Francia (for Spain it seems), it might be useful to pause and ask if we should believe a single word of the Saint-Quentin canon's tale of the nearly five-year 'Norman War' including his drafting in 'Danish auxiliaries'.

First, let us look at the chronology. Implicitly, but rarely explicitly, the conventional date of the Danes' departure from the Seine is the summer of 965,[5] or in Lot's case 966,[6] is linked with Dudo's 'nearly five years' of raiding in Lothar's and Theobald's lands. The whole chronology is problematic. If Dudo's 'nearly five years' is calculated from the summer of 965 we get back to the beginning of 961 or even into 960, the conventional but wrong date for the attack on

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 280; trans. Christiansen, p. 154.
[4] *Ibid.* P. Bouet, 'Le Mont-Saint-Michel entre Bretagne et Normandie de 960 à 1060', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 165-200, at p. 168, says: 'En 961 et 962, Thibaud envahit la Normandie, avec l'aide du roi de France [Lothar] : la ville d'Évreux tomba aux mains du comte de Blois et de Chartres. En 962, Thibaud s'avança même jusque dans les environs de Rouen : mais, à Ermentruville, ce dernier subit une lourde défaite qui l'obligea à une retraite rapide. Avec l'aide de bandes vikings, appelées en renfort, Richard reprit Évreux et entreprit de piller les terres de Thibaud ainsi que celles du roi de France. F. Neveux, *La Normandie des ducs aux rois. Xe-XIIe siècle* (Rennes, 1998), pp. 48-51, says much the same. However, despite Dudo saying that Richard had found it necessary to call for help from other Scandinavians in his fight with Theobald, he does not mention any occasion when these 'Dacians' actually fought with him. Is the fact that Dudo does not mention any help given by these Dacians just another instance of his continual attempt to show Richard as a good, benevolent and far-reaching ruler? Did he perhaps not want to give any credit to anyone other than Richard for the victory in 962 over Theobald (as reported by Flodoard) and the supposed 'recapture' of Évreux? Dudo always presents Richard as the centre of the universe when he obviously was not.
[5] See R. Merlet, 'Les origines du monastère de Saint-Magloire de Paris'; H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin*, pp. 447-51; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 169, n. 114.
[6] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 357.

Nantes. But as we have seen Dudo's 'nearly five years' is not linked by him with the supposed date of the Northmen's departure for Spain, it is linked with the supposed synod of Frankish bishops held, according to William of Jumièges, at Laon, which if it ever took place happened earlier in 965 - if we accept most historians' dating of the Northmen's departure for Spain in the summer of that year. If we calculate nearly five years back from that we arrive at early 960 from when the 'Danish mercenaries' were supposed to have been raiding all over Francia. But most historians maintain that these pagans only arrived on the Seine either in 962 or 963, and 'nearly five years' should therefore be added to that if we want to give any credence to Dudo's statements. In fact, Dudo's 'nearly five years' cannot and should not be taken literally. He uses a period of five years repeatedly throughout *De moribus* it seems as a type of 'time filler' when he is bringing together various bits and pieces to write his tales and wants to indicate an interval of some years but had no idea how long the gap was.

Second, as has been mentioned several times, there is no evidence at all of any Scandinavian raids or attacks in the whole of Neustria and Francia in the first half of the 960s and it staggers belief that Flodoard would not have made some mention of such raiding if it had happened. It is noticeable that some historians when trying to make sense of Dudo's arrival of the 'pagan Danes' at Jeufosse and their subsequent 'nearly five' years of raiding and plundering throughout Francia, and obviously finding no mention of these depredations in the sources resort to saying such extremely unlikely things as that during all this time the Scandinavians and the Franks never fought any battle. That such extensive and long-lasting raids on Theobald's and Lothar's lands were not once met by a military response is not credible.

Third, if there had been any years-long Scandinavian raids around this period where exactly had these raids been happening? A more probable scenario is that Dudo's period of nearly five years, if we take it at face value or even just as meaning some years,[1] actually refers to the raids conducted by the Northmen who had made attacks on coastal Brittany and then on Nantes in the last years of the 950s, which is the subject of this chapter. Both Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges have Richard's putative auxiliaries first causing ruin in Theobald's territory before giving any attention to Lothar's lands. The heart of Theobald's territory was Brittany (including Nantes) and along the river Loire. It is, therefore, entirely credible that the Scandinavians who came to the Seine (if any did, for which see later) were the very same ones who had undertaken these known attacks. If this is so, and I fully accept it is just a conjecture, then having left Nantes and Guérande in 959 or 960, as the *Chronicle of Nantes* says it did, this

[1] P. Bauduin (pers. comm.): '5 ans : c'est un lustre, au sens romain du terme et c'est souvent employé pour désigner une période assez longue.'

Scandinavian fleet could certainly have sailed back north round the Breton peninsula to arrive on the Seine by 962,[1] whether this was at Richard's request or not.

The withdrawal of the 'Danish auxiliaries'

After the rather incredible story of Theobald of Blois giving Évreux 'back' to Richard, the Picard canon then treats us to a long and elaborate drama of how Richard then managed to get the Northmen to leave.[2]

Richard held his own assembly in May at Jeufosse, to which came the courtiers and prelates of the Frankish nation who beg Richard to repress the savagery of the pagans, and rescue Francia from their pestilential invasion.[3] The Franks then make long excuses for what king Lothar had done, putting it down to Theobald's false arguments. They swear that if Richard helps them then the king and the nobles of Francia will guarantee the 'Norman realm' (*regnum Northmannicum*) forever and will never attack it again. In answer to which Richard recaps at length all the harm done to him by King Lothar and Archbishop Bruno, and that it was because of this that he had 'sent to the Danes' (*misi ad Dacos*) and commanded that they inflict 'this dire oppression' on the Franks.[4] Subsequently, Richard calls 'all the Northmen together', thanks them profusely for having come 'from the land of your birth' to help him, but says that the dukes and counts of these people (the Franks) have been afflicted by 'your incessant and hostile depredations' and now humbly request a truce (*pacis*). But 'the Northmen (also called Dacians)' reject this with 'one voice' saying they will never concede such a peace, 'not immediately, nor after an interval of time'. They say that they will stay and by force of arms win the whole of Francia - for Richard of course. They rather threateningly ask Richard what the Dacians and Norwegians, who have already fitted out ships to come to join the campaign, will say. And 'What about the Irish? What about the Alans?'[5]

They repeat that they will conquer Francia for Richard, but if he does not want this then they say that they will simply take it for themselves.[6] Dudo then has Richard coming up with a cunning plan by which he will appeal 'secretly' only to the Northmen's elders and the most powerful amongst them. The Franks, who had been listening dumbfounded to all this for 'twice

[1] There is a gap of a couple of years here. One possibility is that they spent the years immediately after 960 at a base at Coutances/in the Cotentin. But as explored later one can doubt that they ever went to the Seine.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 281-89; trans. Christiansen, pp. 155-63.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 281; trans. Christiansen, p. 155.
[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 281-82; trans. Christiansen, pp. 155-56.
[5] This statement will be discussed further below.
[6] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 282; trans. Christiansen, p. 157.

two times twice eight days', agree.[1] Dudo then has Richard giving the 'more powerful elders of the Northmen's race' a long and rambling theological oration, which somehow won over the amazed 'Dacians', but they still ask how they are going to live if they stop preying on others. To which Richard replies that he will have them baptised and enrich them with generous gifts and extensive grants of land. The elders agree to this offer. Richard says that he will call them back in the morning together with 'the tumultuous stiff-necked people', that is the majority of the Northmen who do not want to agree peace.[2] In the morning the 'uncountable legions of the Dacians' assemble and Richard appeals once again for peace with the Franks. But the Northmen continue to refuse, telling Richard that there will never be peace between them and the Franks. 'No', they say, the Franks will be 'driven into exile, and will perish, and the whole of their nation will be utterly obliterated'. They remind Richard how his grandfather (Rollo) had won by force of arms the land he now rules. To which all the Northmen cry out: 'We will either die, or it will be conquered.'[3]

Richard then plays what he likely thinks is his trump card. Those elders with whom he had secretly met, and bribed, the night before appeal to the assembled Northmen to comply with Richard's prayers. The majority of the Northmen, who did not know of the deal struck in secret the night before, reject this vehemently and say that they will devastate Francia yet more savagely until the Franks are consumed. The Northmen's elders were enraged, pointing out that they were of nobler stock and more valiant than the rest of the Northmen present. Richard leaves.[4] He tells his loyal chieftains that they should let the Northmen quarrel with each other, which went on for another 'three times three days'. The 'rejectors of peace' (that is most of the Northmen) still want to leave, they tell Richard's loyal captains that they will stop attacks in Francia as Richard requests but that he should give them generous supplies and provide them with guides to take them to where they can conquer a kingdom. Richard agrees and says he will also give them most generous honours - wealth.[5] Richard then sends back Lothar's envoys enriched with gifts and a meeting is arranged to take place on the river Epte. At this meeting peace is established between Richard and the Franks. Lothar and the Frankish magnates 'swore the Norman realm to Richard and to his posterity'. Lothar and Richard had become allies and

[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 283; trans. Christiansen, p. 157.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, pp. 283-86; trans. Christiansen, pp. 157-60.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 286; trans. Christiansen, p. 161.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 287; trans. Christiansen, pp. 161-62.

so each rode home 'to his own country in safety'.[1] The Northmen then depart, which will be discussed below.

This peace meeting or *placitum* held on the Epte to which Lothar came is usually dated by historians to June 965,[2] although there is no support for this dating.[3] Sometimes it is placed at Gisors which is on the river Epte.[4] This latter conjecture is simply based on a belief in Dudo's story coupled with a dubious charter dated 18 March 968 in favour of the abbey of Saint-Denis which refers to the circumstances of a request presented by the abbot Gauzlin and the monks of Saint-Denis to Richard 'adientes presentium nostrum communi Francorum Normannorumque Gisortis placito'.[5] Following Lot and Prentout, Pierre Bauduin concludes: 'L'assemblée de Gisors peut-être identifiée sans peine au plaid réuni, vraisemblablement au début de l'été 965, pour conclure solennellement la paix entre Richard Ier et le roi Lothaire.'[6] In my opinion this is rather grasping at straws - trying to find evidence to support Dudo. This assembly may very well have happened, but rather than presuming it is independent evidence of Dudo's veracity it may perhaps have been the other way round. That is that Dudo knew of such an assembly on the Epte and used it upon which to build his own story of the climax of Richard's fight with the Franks, and getting the Danish auxiliaries to leave.[7] Certainly there is nothing in the charter which even hints at what Dudo says happened on the Epte.

It is obvious that most of this long tale is either Dudo's pure invention or at best an oral tale he got from one of his Norman informants in his own time. At its heart is a story of some Scandinavian pirates or mercenaries being bought off by Richard, a few stayed were baptised and received lands whilst most left after being paid a tribute, preferring to remain pagan and carrying on their raiding life.

After his long tale of how the Scandinavians were persuaded to leave, Dudo adds another very obscure comment. When the Northmen had finally agreed to quit the Seine the canon of Saint-Quentin says that of 'those who desired to wander in the ways of paganism, he [Richard] had them guided to Spain by guides from Coutances (*Constantiniensibus viatoribus*)'.[8] Eric

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[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 287; trans. Christiansen, p. 162.
[2] For example P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 144, 169; H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin*, pp. 388, 447-51; J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie*, p. 93. As mentioned earlier, F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 357, put in in 966.
[3] See, for example, E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 223, n. 450.
[4] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 356, P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 144.
[5] *Recueil des actes des ducs de Normandie (911-1066)*, ed. M. Fauroux, no. 3, pp. 70-72; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 144.
[6] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 144.
[7] I present this only as a theoretical possibility.
[8] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 287; trans. Christiansen, p. 162.

Christiansen suggests that Dudo's 'guides from Coutances' is a euphemism for pirates.[1] This could well be correct. In typical Dudo fashion we are being led to believe that Richard of Rouen had some authority, or at least some significant influence, over Northmen having a base at Coutances. We are also being asked to accept the idea that the supposed mercenaries who did not want to stay had not a clue how to get to Spain and that they needed Richard to find guides for them. This beggars belief. Richard may have had communications or connections with other Scandinavians or 'pirates' operating from Coutances but no more. As was discussed in the previous chapter, he certainly had no authority over them. Whatever Dudo would have us believe it seems that by the early 960s Richard's 'Normandy' had shrunk back to roughly the area his grandfather Rollo had been granted in 911 by Charles the Simple - the very 'first Normandy'. Dudo's picture of 'Normandy', its extent, control and influence, is more a reflection of the situation or even concerns in his own time in the early eleventh century than the reality of things on the ground in the first two decades of Richard's reign, or, better, his lucky survival as count of Rouen after his father's murder in 942. Additionally, any Northmen who had been raiding in Francia for some years would have had no need for 'guides' from Coutances supplied by Richard to lead them to Spain. It had been a well-travelled route by Scandinavian fleets for more than a century: 'Sail round the Breton peninsula and follow the coast south.' It is more likely that the Scandinavians who supposedly left the Seine might actually have gone to Spain, and perhaps indeed travelled via Coutances as Dudo seems to suggest they did, but they could conceivably have been the Northmen of Coutances itself and not some amorphous group of mercenaries come from somewhere to help Richard of Rouen.

Another part of Dudo's story might also hint in this direction - in the direction of the Cotentin and Coutances. This is the story of Richard's second marriage to Gunnor.[2] Dudo says she was 'sprung from the most famous stock of the Dacians',[3] although he only actually names her as Gunnor in what seems to be a later addition to his work after she had died.[4] Similarly William of Jumièges has Gunnor being of the most noble Danish origin/lineage (*ex nobilissima Danorum prosapia*) and Richard married her after his first wife Emma had died.[5] Gunnor was

[1] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 223, n. 452.
[2] For the importance of Gunnor in Normandy, particularly after Richard I's death in 996, see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 64-66, 68; E. van Houts, 'Countess Gunnor of Normandy (*c*. 950-1031)', *Collegium Medievale*, 12 (1999), pp. 7-24.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 289; trans. Christiansen, p. 163.
[4] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 224, n. 460.
[5] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, IV. 18, pp. 128-29. We do not know when Emma died, she was still alive in 966.

still alive when Dudo was writing,[1] and the Picard canon says in his eulogy to her, borrowing a phrase from Martianus Capella's *Lady Rhetoric*, that she was 'enriched by a hoard of capacious memory and recollection'.[2] This phrase has often been used to suggest that Gunnor was a very important influence on and a source for Dudo, although this assumption is not universal.[3] More important for our present purposes is that it is possible that Gunnor came from a powerful 'viking' family in the Cotentin. Eric Christiansen says: 'Gonnor came from a rich Cotentin family', while Mark Hagger says 'Richard's marriage to Gunnor gave him and his sons an alliance with one of the greatest families of the Cotentin'.[4] Eleanor Searle argued that Gunnor's father belonged to a 'second-wave' of Scandinavian (indeed 'Danish') arrivals which happened in the 960s.[5] As noted above Dudo spends a lot of time describing how Richard tried to get the pagans who had arrived on the Seine to convert to Christianity and settle down. He would give them lands and wealth if they did so. Eventually some of these Northmen did decide to stay, convert and receive lands, while most of the others left for Spain - via Coutances it might be inferred. Dudo even suggests that some of Richard's own Rouen Northmen left with them. It is thus quite possible that Gunnor was the daughter of one of the chieftains who had come to the Seine and that her father came from the Cotentin. Frankish kings and other nobles often made peace with or entered into an *amicitia* with the leaders of groups of troublesome Northmen. This very often involved marrying a daughter of the king as well as the Northmen and particularly their leader accepting baptism.[6] By the early 960s Richard and many of his Northmen were Christian (although some were clearly not), and Richard probably saw himself

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[1] Gunnor died in January 1031, for which see L. Musset, 'Le satiriste Garnier de Rouen et son milieu (début du XIe siecle)', *Revue du Moyen Age latin*, 10 (1954), pp. 237-66, at p. 244.

[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 289: 'capacisque memoriae et recordationis thesauro profusius locupletae'; trans. Christiansen, pp. 163-64, 224, n. 460. The only other person Dudo mentions as one of his informants was Richard I's half-brother Count Rodulf of Ivry.

[3] See, for example, P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 64-65; E. Searle, 'Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of Saint Quentin', *Viator*, 15 (1984), pp. 119-38, at pp. 122, 136; *eadem*, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840–1066* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 65-66, 87-90, 93-9, 100-7. For the opposite view see E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. xxvii, p. 224, n. 460; F. Lifhitz, 'Dudo's historical narrative and the Norman succession of 996', *Journal of Medieval History*, 20 (1994), pp. 101-20, at p. 117.

[4] E. Christiansen, *Dudo*, p. 224, n. 460; M. Hagger, 'Confrontation and Unification', p. 430. The evidence for a Cotentin origin is found in donations of properties on the peninsula given by Gunnor's putative brother Herfast to the monastery of Saint-Père at Chartres, where he was a monk in the 1020s, as well as some later genealogical interpolations made by Robert of Torigni into William of Jumieges's *GND*; see E. van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni as Genealogist', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. Allen Brown* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 215-33, at pp. 230-33. See also D. C. Douglas, 'The Ancestors of William fitz Osbern', *English Historical Review*, 59 (1942), pp. 62-79; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 218-19.

[5] E. Searle, 'Fact and Pattern', p. 132; *eadem*, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 61-67, 103-4.

[6] For extensive analyses of the various forms of 'peace' entered into see P. Bauduin, *Le monde Franc*, pp. 47-122; S. Lebouteiller, *Faire la paix dans la Scandinavie médiévale: recherche sur les formes de pacification et les rituels de paix dans le monde scandinave au Moyen Âge (VIIIe-XIIIe siècle)*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Caen Normandy, 2016).

as a 'count' in the Frankish mold. It is thus conceivable that Richard had agreed to marry a daughter, Gunnor, of a Cotentin/Coutances chieftain as part of his deal to get some of these troublesome Northmen who had arrived on the Seine to stay, be converted, acknowledge Richard's suzerainty and settle down. It is also not out of the question that these chieftains included Gunnor's father as Searle suggests.

Overall, there are some indications, in Dudo's account at least, that some of the Northmen who supposedly came to the Seine in *circa* 962, came from Coutances and the Cotentin. Altering Alan of Lille's famous statement 'mille viae ducunt homines per saecula Romam', 'a thousand roads lead men forever to Rome', all the roads here do seem to lead to the Cotentin and Coutances.

Hugh of Fleury's *Deiri* and *Alani*

To return yet again to the question of connections, the whence and whither, there is one more intriguing piece of information to consider. This too might seem to point to the Cotentin. Dudo of Saint-Quentin wrote that the Northmen that Richard called in were *Dacians*.[1] Although William of Jumièges obviously thought so this does not mean that Dudo invariably meant Danes by the term Dacians, much less Danes from Denmark. In *De moribus* the canon of Saint-Quentin's term *Dacians* generally refers to various Northmen who were differentiated from the 'Normans' of Rouen/Normandy. In the early twelfth century Hugh of Fleury wrote in his *Liber modernorum regum*:

> Sequenti vero, anno Normannorum comes Richardus depopulatus est Carnotensem et Dunensem terram super comitem Tetbaldum. Tetbaldus quoque Normannicos fines ingressus, Ebroicacensem cepit civitatem. Sed dum inde revertitur, Richardus transmeato amne ad casa Hermentrudis in portu fluminis Seccanae super eum irruit, et superatum de terra sua effugavit. Demum quoque Danos, Alanos et Deiros sibi in auxilium advocans, tamdiu prefatum debellavit Tetbaldum, donec ipse Tetbaldus Ebroicacensem illi reddidit civitatem. Quibus patratis, barbari a Richardo bene remunerati, relicta Gallia reversi sunt ad propria.[2]

[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 277; trans. Christiansen, p. 150.
[2] Hugh of Fleury, *Liber qui modernorum regum Francorum continent actus*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH*, *Scriptores,* 9 (Hanover, 1851), pp. 376-95, at p. 384. Hugh probably wrote this *Liber* between 1114 and 1125; see P. Bauduin, 'Hugues de Fleury et l'histoire norrmande', in D. Crouch and K. Thompson (eds.), *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250. Essays for David Bates*, *Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe*, 14 (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 157-74, at p. 162.

Hugh undoubtedly borrowed his basic story of this episode from the Norman tradition, as he often did elsewhere, in this case most noticeably from William of Jumièges. But Hugh then adds two other very specific groups besides the *Dani* whom he says were also involved: the *Deiri* and the *Alani*. Both are interesting but rather archaic terms. Where Hugh, who was essentially a compiler, got this information from and what he might have meant by these terms will probably never be known with any certainty although I do rather doubt that he simply made them up.

What follows is very much an initial exploration of who these *Deiri* and *Alani* might have been and whether we should question if Hugh's testimony deserves to be given any independent authority.

Let us start with the *Alani*. Dudo actually uses the terms *Alania* and *Alani* four times in *De moribus*. First, when relating his origin myth of the *Dacians* who come to the future Normandy in his garbled geography Dudo refers to 'the region of the great multitudes of Alania'.[1] All Dudo's geography here is borrowed almost word for word from Isidore of Seville's early seventh-century *Etymologiae* which Isidore himself had taken directly from Orosius's early fifth-century *Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem* (Seven Books of History Against the Pagans);[2] it is therefore of no relevance here. Dudo next refers to *Alania* when talking about Rollo's unnamed father who had 'won for himself lands adjacent to Dacia and Alania'.[3] Dudo is now placing Alania somewhere in Scandinavia although we cannot deduce anything more. Dudo's first mention of the *Alani* rather than *Alania* comes when he is telling his fabulous and concocted story of the German/Saxon king Otto coming to Rouen in 946,[4] where when the Saxons are discussing how to take Rouen Dudo puts a long speech in the mouth of Otto's 'nephew'. The nephew says he will go ahead and 'if there should fall out any battles against me',[5] that is if he is opposed by the Northmen of Rouen, he will crush them in their thousands. He had, Dudo has him say, 'often fought against the Dacians and the Alans (*Alani*)' and indeed

[1] Dudo: ed Lair, p. 129; trans. Christiansen, p. 15.
[2] Cf. Dudo: ed Lair, p. 129; trans. Christiansen, p. 15; Isidore of Seville, *Isidore Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford, 1911), book 14, 4, 3; Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem,* ed. C. Zangemeister, in *CESL*, 5 (Vienna, 1882), xxiiii, book. 1, 2, p. 53.
[3] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 142; trans. Christiansen, p. 26.
[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 254; trans. Christiansen, p. 129. As usual Dudo does not mention any date, but the basic facts of what happened when Otto came to West Francia can be found in Flodoard's *Annals s.a.* 946: *Annales*, pp. 100-3; *Annals*, p. 44, and in Widukind of Corvey's *Res gestae Saxonicae* written in the 960s: *Widukindi Monachi Corbeiensis Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum Libri Tres*, *Die Sachsengeschichte des Widukind von Korvei,* book 3, pp. 104-7. For an overview see P. Lauer, *Le règne de Louis IV*, pp. 144-55; F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, pp. 5-6.
[5] See E. Christainsen, *Dudo*, p. 216, n. 383.

against 'the Goths and Hungarians'.[1] More pertinent perhaps is Dudo's last mention of *Alani* because it is made in connection with the Danes whom Richard I had (according to Dudo) called in to help him in his fight against Theobald the Trickster. As discussed earlier, according to Dudo these Northmen had inflicted many depredations on the Franks. Richard was imploring them to stop and declare a truce. The Northmen did not want to stop. They told Richard that neither now nor later, nor even when the Frankish princes had been killed, would they desist. They would win 'the whole of Francia' - for Richard of course.[2] Then these Northmen ask Richard rather rhetorically and threateningly: 'Alas! Alas! What will the rest of the Dacians and the Norwegians (*Northguegigenae*)[3] say, who have fitted out and loaded ships to help us in this campaign, and will be coming over to us in immense force? What about the Irish? (*quid de Hirensibus*) What about the Alans (*quid de Alani*s)?'[4] What Dudo is suggesting is a fear that other Northmen could come into Richard's realm to join with the 'Danes' already there and extend the area of the Scandinavian conquest that Richard, now being presented as an assimilated Frankish magnate, was not willing to do.

But what are we to make of Dudo's reference to *Alani*? It might be just a trope but this still does not explain what Dudo had in mind by *Alani* even if he is referring to the situation in his own time. Dudo was clearly making a distinction between the Danes and Norwegians, and the Irish who were possibly Irish-based or Irish-connected Northmen, and the *Alani*. We should not take Dudo's report here any more seriously than the rest of his work. Perhaps here too we have yet another (partial?) back projection of Norman events and concerns in Dudo's own time? As will be explored in detail in Chapter 16, two clearly piratical and mercenary Northmen, Olaf and Lacman, did come to Rouen probably in about late 1013, and supposedly after having raided along coastal Brittany and capturing Dol-de-Bretagne.[5] One of these chieftains, Lacman, had Irish or Irish Sea connections, while Olaf was likely Olaf Haraldsson the future Saint Olaf king of Norway.

Perhaps an inspiration for Hugh of Fleury's mention of *Alani* was Abbo of Fleury's *Passio of Saint Edmund* written during Abbo's stay at Ramsey Abbey in England in 985-987 before he returned to his monastery at Fleury (later called Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire) where he was later to become abbot. Hugh had access to the great library and records of the monastery of Fleury and these doubtless included Abbo's *Passio*. Abbo was writing about the activities of the early

[1] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 254; trans. Christiansen, p. 129.
[2] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 282; trans. Christiansen, p. 156
[3] Literally 'Men of the North Way': Norwegian (ON *Norvegs-menn*).
[4] Dudo: ed. Lair, p. 282; trans. Christiansen, p. 156.
[5] See William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, V. 10-12, vol. 2, pp. 22-28.

'great army' in England in the late 860s and of the chieftain Inguar who was lurking with his fleet in East Anglia and not daring to attack openly. Abbo then says: 'For just as the wolf is accustomed to steal in the evening down to the plains, and to return with haste by night to his lair in the woods, so it was the practice of Danish and Alanic people (*Danorum et Alanorum natio*), always intent upon a career of theft, never to risk open and fair fight with their enemies.'[1]

Although it is clear that Hugh borrowed his basic schema from the Norman tradition, unlike Dudo and William of Jumièges Hugh has Richard's Danish helpers being already accompanied by other groups of Northmen called *Deiri* and *Alani* when they first arrive on the Seine. It has to be said that Hugh might well have just condensed William of Jumièges' account, although, as Pierre Bauduin has said, Hugh borrowed from many sources including from now lost Norman sources relating to the 'history of the first *ducs*'.[2] Maybe Dudo of Saint-Quentin and William of Jumièges and Hugh of Fleury got their information independently from these other 'Norman sources' and just made different things out of them? Of course, this is just speculation. But the fact is that, unlike with Dudo, Hugh mentions the *Deiri* as well as the *Alani*. We will examine below who these *Deiri* might have been.

Believing that Hugh of Fleury's *Alani* must have been referring to a group of Alans most scholars have been stumped or baffled by this reference. *A priori* there seems no conceivable way that a group of this ancient Indo-European tribe, possibly originally coming from near the Sea of Azov, could still have been active in France in the tenth century and certainly not still carrying this ethnic name. The Alans had crossed the Rhine with the Vandals and the Sueves at the beginning of the fifth century. Some then went on to Galicia in northern Iberia and founded a kingdom there. Bernard Bachrach has studied the Alans in the West and particularly those in Gaul.[3] Groups of Alans settled as Roman colonists in several parts of Gaul during the fifth century, most densely Bachrach maintains in Armorica/Brittany.[4] Bachrach has argued that the Alans who had settled in Brittany were expert horsemen and that they formed the original foundation for the well-attested prowess of the Breton 'chivalry' for some centuries to come.[5] Although I find it very doubtful it is not completely out of the question that Cotentin-based

[1] Abbo of Fleury, *Passio Sancti Edmundi*, in *Corolla Sancti Eadmundi: The Garland of Saint Edmund King and Martyr*, ed. and trans. F. Hervey (London, 1907), pp. 6-59, at chap. VI, pp. 22-23.
[2] P. Bauduin, 'Hugues de Fleury et l'histoire normande', in D. Crouch and K. Thompson (eds.), *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250. Essays for David Bates* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 157-74, at pp. 165, 172.
[3] B. S. Bachrach, *A History of the Alans in the West: From Their First Appearance in the Sources of Classical Antiquity Through the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, 1973); *idem*, 'The Alans in Gaul', *Traditio*, 23 (1967), pp. 476-89.
[4] They also settled around Dudo's home of Saint-Quentin.
[5] B. S. Bachrach, 'The Origins of Armorican Chivalry', *Technology and Culture*, 10. 2 (1969), pp. 166-71.

Northmen had joined forces with some Breton (Alanic?) horsemen to come to the Seine in *circa* 962.

It should also be noted that Hugh of Fleury repeatedly uses the term *Alani* in book 5 of his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*Ecclesiastical History*), where he is clearly referring to Alans operating in Gaul in the fifth century. Hugh borrowed some of these stories of the Alans from the Venerable Bede's *De temporum ratione* (*The Reckoning of Time*) and/or from the early ninth-century Freculf of Lisieux's *Universal History*.[1] Freculf was also greatly influenced by and copied from Bede. Hugh clearly knew who the historic Alans were although why he used such an archaic term for events in the tenth century remains a mystery. On the other hand, maybe Hugh's *Alani* is not referring to the Alans at all. *Alaunus* was a Celtic word (possibly for a god), and was abundantly used in Roman times for many places and rivers in Western Europe, including in Gaul and Britain.[2] Of all the places and rivers named *Alaunus* or similar in Roman times only two would make any historical sense as places where some of the Northmen who supposedly came to the Seine could conceivably have hailed from. To take the least likely first, the river Aln in northern Northumbria (in the old kingdom of Bernicia) derives its name from the ancient river name Alaunus/Alaunos as mentioned in Ptolemy's second-century *Geographica* and in the *c*.700 *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia*.[3] The villages of Alnwick, Alnham and Alnmouth were named after the river. Hugh of Fleury had very strong connections with the Anglo-Norman royal dynasty as well as with Capetian royalty.[4] He even dedicated his *Historia Ecclesiastica* to Countess Adela of Blois, the youngest daughter of William the Conqueror, and his *Liber modernorum regum* to William's granddaughter, the empress Mathilda. He also had connections and correspondence with other Norman and Anglo-Norman magnates and churchmen. It is thus most interesting to note that Robert of Mowbray (Robert de Montbray), whose family came from the northern Cotentin, and whose uncle Geoffrey was the bishop of Coutances, was the earl of Northumbria between 1086 and 1095 (he died in 1125).[5] In 1093 when king Malcolm III of Scotland invaded Northumbria he came to Alnwick Castle where Robert defeated him on Saint Brice's day: 13 November. There is much more to say

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[1] L. M. Ruiter, *Hugo van Fleury, Historia Ecclesiastica, editio altera: kritische teksteditie* (Groningen, 2016), book V, 1588 and 1707.

[2] See S. Laisné, 'Alauna/Alleaume (commune de Valognes, Manche) - étude linguistique', in *Valognes (Manche - 50) Alauna, L'agglomération antique d'Alleaume, Prospection thématique, Document final de synthèse, volume 1 : résultats*, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication - Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche (2012), pp. 63-88.

[3] *Ibid*, pp. 85-86.

[4] P. Bauduin, 'Hugues de Fleury', pp. 159-60.

[5] W. M. Aird, 'Mowbray, Robert de, earl of Northumbria (d. 1115/1125)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); J. Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray, Bishop of Countances, 1049-1093', *The English Historical Review*, 59. 234 (1944).

about Robert of Mowbray and his Cotentin family, but could Hugh of Fleury have heard from one of his connections a term for this area of Northumbria which reminded him of the Alans he knew so well? We might doubt it because as far as I am aware this area of northern Northumbria or its people was never called anything remotely like Alan/Alaun throughout the Middle Ages. Additionally, when the Anglo-Norman romancer Geoffrey Gaimar (writing in about 1136-40 not long after Hugh's death) mentions the battle between Robert of Mowbray and Malcolm III in his *L'Estoire des Engleis*, he says it took place at Alnwick (*Alnewic*).[1] Secondly, and in a similar vein, the commune of Alleaume at the gates of the present town of Valognes in the northern Cotentin was previously the Roman town of Alauna/Alaunia, although a direct etymological link between the two names is unlikely.[2] This is precisely the area that was supposedly heavily settled by Scandinavians in the tenth century. But yet again was this area or its people ever called anything related to Alauna/Alaunia at the time Hugh was writing? As Stéphane Laisné has shown the name could probably have evolved in the post-Roman period to something like Alone/Allonnes, as did several other places in France previously called *Alauna* or similar, although this is not attested in this case.[3] The third possibility is the present river Aulne in the far west of Brittany which leads inland from the important Breton monastery of Landévennec which was destroyed by Northmen in 913. This river was also called *Alauna*/*Alaunus* in Roman times. In my opinion it is almost inconceivable that in the mid-tenth century Bretons from the west of the Armorican peninsula could have been involved with a group of Northmen coming to the Seine, particularly when we know that in the late 950s the Northmen had once again been attacking the coasts of Brittany before arriving at Nantes. All in all, it is doubtful although not impossible that Hugh's *Alani* is referring either to Northmen from around the river Aln in northern Northumbria or from the river Aulne in western Brittany. Yet given all the many other Cotentin connections, including that Hugh of Fleury was probably from a Cotentin family, it is not completely out of the question that his *Alani* meant Northmen from the northern Cotentin in and around present-day Valognes.

Finally, we must look at Hugh of Fleury's *Deiri*. Who were they? It might be of relevance that Hugh although living and writing at the monastery of Fleury on the Loire probably

[1] Cf. Gaimar, Geoffrey: *Geffrei Gaimar: Estoire des Engleis (History of the English)*, ed. and trans. I. Short (Oxford, 2009); *The Anglo-Norman metrical chronicle of Geoffrey Gaimar, printed for the first time entire from the manuscript in the British Museum. With illustrative notes, and an appendix containing The lay of Havelok, The legend of Ernulf, and the life of Herward*, ed. T. Wright (London, 1850), p. 212.
2009).
[2] S. Laisné, 'Alauna/Alleaume', pp. 63, 65.
[3] *Ibid.*

originally came from the Cotentin peninsula and thus had a western 'Norman' background.[1] Ferdinand Lot thought that '*Deiros* désigne les habitants de la *Deira*, contrée de la Grande-Bretagne, qui s'étendait de l'Humber à l'ancien rempart d'Hadrien'.[2] In the same vein Lesley Abrams says that Hugh's *Deiri* were 'men from Deira, i.e. York'.[3] *Deira* was of course the ancient British and then Anglian kingdom in northern England situated between the rivers Humber and Tees with its eventual capital at York.[4] There is no credible alternative as far as I can see, but where did Hugh get the term from and what was he suggesting by it? Lot said that as the term *Deira* had disappeared by the twelfth century Hugh would have had difficulty knowing it. He suggests 'il l'a emprunté à quelque source perdue aujourd'hui'.[5] This may well be true. But Lot was not correct when he said that the term *Deira* had disappeared by the twelfth century. On the contrary it was still very much alive. All the twelfth-century English or Anglo-Norman chroniclers use the term, including John of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon and Roger of Wendover,[6] plus the scribe of the early twelfth-century Durham *De primo Saxonum adventu* who might have been Symeon of Durham.[7] With the exception of the last one all these chroniclers borrow a possibly apocryphal story[8] contained in the Northumbrian Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*Ecclesiastical History of the*

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[1] In a marginal note in the first redaction of Hugh of Fleury's *Historia Ecclesiastica* we find written: 'Hugo qui hunc libellum a diuersis codicibus deflorauit, Hugo de Sancta Maria cognominatur a quadum uillula patris sui in qua est sita ecclesia sancte Dei genitricis Marie' (cf. L. M. Ruiter, *Hugo van Fleury,* p. X, n. 9. This church of Saint-Marie in the Cotentin which belonged to Hugo's father suggests that Hugo belonged to this well-known Cotentin family. See J. Laporte, 'Fleury', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie écclesiastique*, 17 (Paris, 1969), col. 441-76, at p. 450; L. M. Ruiter, *Hugo van Fleury*, p. X; N. Lettinck, *Geschiedbeschouwing en beleving van de eigen tijd in de eerste helft van de twaalfde eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1983), p. 43; M. Chazan, 'La représentation de l'Empire chez Hugues de Fleury, Orderic Vital et Robert de Torigni', in P. Bauduin and M.-A. Lucas-Avenel (eds.), *L'Historiographie médiévale normande et ses sources antiques (Xe-XIIe siècle)* (Caen, 2014), pp. 171-90, at p. 171.

[2] F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, p. 353, n. 2.

[3] L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', in C. Harper-Bill and E. van Houts (eds.), *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 48-62, at p. 44. See also L. Musset, 'Pour l'étude des relations entre les colonies scandinaves d'Angleterre et de Normandie', in *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 145-56, at p. 147, reprinted from *Mélanges de linguistique et de philologie Fernand Mossé in memoriam* (Paris 1959), pp. 330-39; P. Bauduin, 'Hugues de Fleury', p. 172.

[4] For a good introduction to the history of the kingdom of Deira see N. J. Higham, *The Kingdom of Northumbria AD 350-1100* (Stroud, 1993), pp. 59-130. M. Adams, *The King in the North. The Life and Times of Oswald of Northumbria*, 2nd edn (London, 2014) is also very good in this regard. The Anglian king Æthelfrith had unified Deira with the more northerly part of 'Northumbria', Bernicia, in around 604. York and Yorkshire (more or less the ancient Deira) had been controlled by Scandinavian chieftains since at least 918/19, when the Irish-connected chieftain Raegnald took or retook York. The intermittent Scandinavian control of Deira and York in fact goes back all the way to 866/867 when Inguar and Ubba early leaders of the rather misleadingly named 'great army' in England had first captured York and then defeated the 'Northumbrian' kings Ælle and Osberht.

[5] F. Lot, 'Gormond et Isembard. Recherches sur les fondements historiques de cette épopée', *Romania*, 27 (1898), pp. 1-54, at p. 19, n. 2.

[6] And even Geoffrey of Monmouth.

[7] *De primo Saxonum vel Normannorum adventu, sive de eorundem regibus*, in *Symeonis monachi opera omnia*, vol. 2, pp. 365-84.

[8] Bede says he had received the story from 'the ancients'.

English People) which tells of how in the late sixth century the future pope Gregory the Great (d. 604) had gone with others to view some recently arrived slaves being sold by merchants in Rome. Their bodies were white, their countenance beautiful and their hair was very fine. Gregory asks from what country or nation they had been brought and was told they were from the island of Britain. He then asked the name of their nation and was told they were Angles, to which he punningly replied that they had an angelic face. Gregory then asked the name of the province from which they had been brought, and the reply was that the province's name was Deira. Once again Gregory punned the name saying 'Truly are they *De ira* [...] withdrawn from wrath and called to the mercy of Christ'. Finally, Gregory asked the name of the king of this province and was told it was Ælla.[1] All the twelfth-century chroniclers mentioned above reproduced this story. John of Worcester's *Chronicle*, however, even mentions *Ælla* as the king of the province of Deira (*Ælla in provincia Deirorum regnum*) and king of Deira (*Ælla rex Deirorum)*, the Deiran and Bernician king Æthelfrith (*Æthelfrithum*, *Deirorum Berniciorumque regem*), kings Edwin and Osric *in Deirorum provincia*, and Oswin as *Deirorum rex Oswine*.[2] As will be shown below this is important with regard to Hugh of Fleury.

It has been mentioned that Hugh of Fleury drew on Bede's *De temporum ratione* regarding the Alans he mentions in his *Historia ecclesiastica*. But Hugh's *Historia ecclesiastica* also includes a story concerning the missionaries sent to England by Pope Gregory the Great and particularly to Northumbria. In book 6 of Hugh's *Historia ecclesiastica* we read:

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[1] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, eds. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), book 2.1. Ælla was a sixth-century king of Deira; see R. Cramp, 'Ælla (d. 588)', *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1 (London). The text reads: 'Nec silentio praetereunda opinio, quae de beato Gregorio traditione maiorum ad nos usque perlata est; qua uidelicet ex causa admonitus tam sedulam erga salutem nostrae gentis curam gesserit. Dicunt, quia die quadam cum, aduenientibus nuper mercatoribus, multa uenalia in forum fuissent conlata, multi ad emendum confluxissent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios aduenisse, ac uidisse inter alia pueros uenales positos candidi corporis, ac uenusti uultus, capillorum quoque forma egregia. Quos cum aspiceret, interrogauit, ut aiunt, de qua regione uel terra essent adlati. Dictumque est, quia de Brittania insula, cuius incolae talis essent aspectus. Rursus interrogauit, utrum idem insulani Christiani, an paganis adhuc erroribus essent inplicati. Dictum est, quod essent pagani. At ille, intimo ex corde longa trahens suspiria: 'Heu, pro dolor!' inquit, 'quod tam lucidi uultus homines tenebrarum auctor possidet, tantaque gratia frontispicii mentem ab interna gratia uacuam gestat!' Rursus ergo interrogauit, quod esset uocabulum gentis illius. Responsum est, quod Angli uocarentur. At ille: 'Bene,' inquit; 'nam et angelicam habent faciem, et tales angelorum in caelis decet esse coheredes. Quod habet nomen ipsa prouincia, de qua isti sunt adlati?' Responsum est, quod Deiri uocarentur idem prouinciales. At ille: 'Bene,' inquit, 'Deiri; de ira eruti, et ad misericordiam Christi uocati. Rex prouinciae illius quomodo appellatur?' Responsum est, quod Aelli diceretur. At ille adludens ad nomen ait: 'Alleluia, laudem Dei Creatoris illis in partibus oportet cantari.'

[2] *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe, vol. 1 (London, 1848), pp. 6, 8, 13, 20. See also *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 450-1066*, eds. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. P. McGurk and J. Bray, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1995).

> Is etiam Augustinum, Mellitum et Iohannes[1] cum aliis pluribus monachis religiosis atque sanctissimus mist, ut Anglorum gentem. Que erat ab aquilone Humbris fluminis sub regibus Helle (Ælla) et Edifrido (Æthelfrith) posita, sua predicatione ad fidem conuerterent Christi. Quam gentem prefatorum labore uirorum Deo lucrifaciens, Londonie et Ebboraci (York) metropolitanos consecrauit episcopos.[2]

A couple of the elements of this story can found in Bede's *De temporum ratione*, but more can be derived from his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* which describe at length the first of Gregory's missionaries to the English, Augustine, sent by Gregory to England in 595 and the second wave sent to support Augustine in 601, including Mellitus who became the first bishop of London in 604 and Paulinus (who might or might not be Hugh's Johannes) who became archbishop of York in 625. One notable possible borrowing from the *Historia ecclesiastica* is where Bede mentions 'the nation of the Angles that live on the north side of the river Humber', 'Quo tempore etiam gens Nordanhymbrorum, hoc est ea natio Anglorum, quae ad Aquilonalem Humbre fluminis plagam habitabat',[3] which can be compared with Hugh's 'ut Anglorum gentem. Que erat ab aquilone Humbris fluminis'. Bede mentions Ælla only in regard to the story of the slave boys in Rome but he repeatedly talks of Æthelfrith. As mentioned above, John of Worcester has amongst other things *Ælla in provincia Deirorum regnum* and *Æthelfrithum, Deirorum Berniciorumque regem*. Finally, we should look briefly at the *De primo Saxonum adventu* which contains several brief histories of the 'English' kingdoms including one called *De regibus Deirorum*.[4] As its name implies this contains repeated mentions of *Deira*, *regnum Deirorum* and *in Deirorum*, and the names of Deira's kings: *Elle*, *Eadwinus*, *Ethelfridus*, *Oswinus*, *Osricus* and *Oswaldus*.[5] This tract was written at Durham during the episcopate of the Norman Ranulf Flambard (1099-1128).[6]

Overall, I would tentatively suggest that Hugh took the name *Deiri* from an originally Northumbrian source, quite possibly from Bede whose works Hugh knew.[7] Alternatively, he

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[1] Hugh's mention of *Iohannes* (John) is difficult to explain; perhaps Hugh meant Gregory's missionary Paulinus who became bishop of York in the 620s. The only John (*Johannes*) mentioned by Bede, and following him by John of Worcester, is Ioannes IV who was only briefly pope in 642, succeeding popes Severinus and Honorius I.
[2] L. M. Ruiter, *Hugo van Fleury,* book 6, pp. 160-61.
[3] *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, eds. Colgrave and Mynors, book 2. 9, p. 82.
[4] *De primo Saxonum adventu*, in *Symeonis monachi opera omnia*, vol. 2, pp. 378-79.
[5] All kings who ruled over Deira at this time, although some were originally from Bernicia.
[6] Ranulf was a Norman, the son of a parish priest in the diocese of Bayeux. He was probably born about 1060 as he was close to seventy when he died in 1128. He originally worked for Odo of Bayeux but later entered the chancellery of King William I, Odo's half-brother.
[7] The abbey of Fleury obtained many books from England some of which could have come to Fleury by way of Normandy, see P. Bauduin, 'Hugues de Fleury', p. 160.

may have taken it from an oral or written story circulating in England in the early twelfth century possibly the same one used by John of Worcester and the scribe of the *De primo Saxonum adventu*. His source of information might even have been someone like Ranulf Flambard but this is pure speculation.

If Hugh's *Alani* and *Deiri* do contain any real historical information about Northmen coming to the Seine in the early 960s then this would hint at a connection with York (in Northumbrian Deira) and perhaps even with the Cotentin. However, regardless of Hugh's sources for the terms he uses, should we really impute any independent historical value to his *Alani* and *Deiri*? This is a difficult question to answer; perhaps we should not, given his 'role' as a compiler. Nevertheless, as was explored earlier there could very well have been a connection between Northmen from Northumbria and some in the Cotentin around this time, and with those who attacked Brittany and Nantes in the late 950s, whether they ever acted on behalf of Richard I or not.

Richard's Danish mercenaries, fact or fiction?

In the preceding sections I have suspended the many doubts we may have concerning the basic historical veracity of Dudo's story of Richard I calling in Northmen to help him, their subsequent 'nearly five years' of ravages in Francia and how they were eventually persuaded by Richard I to leave for Spain. Here I would like to pose a rather heretical question: Are Richard I's 'Danish mercenaries' just fiction?

It has already been noted several times that the Saint-Quentin canon not only frequently borrowed the core of many of his tales from Flodoard of Reims, which he then dislocates in space and shifts in time, as well as often changing the protagonists. But Dudo also continually brought events and concerns from his own times around the millennium into stories which are ostensibly about events much earlier in the tenth century. Could his story of the Northmen called in by Richard I not mentioned anywhere else[1] be one example of such a back projection to the early 960s?

As we shall see in more detail in Chapter 16, according to William of Jumièges in the early eleventh century a struggle broke out between Richard II and Odo II Count of Chartres-Blois, the grandson of Theobald the Trickster.[2] The object of the conflict was supposedly Richard's

[1] This is, of course, mentioned by William of Jumièges and Hugh of Fleury as well but their reports derive from Dudo.
[2] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, V. 10-12, vol. 2, pp. 22-28. See also P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 181-82.

desire to take back the dowry (*dot*) of his sister Mathilde which he had given to her husband Odo when they had married, sometime before 1005.[1] Richard demanded the restitution of the dowry which was composed of half of the château of Dreux and land adjacent to the banks of the river Avre.[2] Odo of Blois refused. He gathered an army 'arrive sur les bords de l'Avre et construit le château de Tillières-sur-Avre' which he confided to Neal of Cotentin, Rodulf of Tosny and his son Roger. With the support of counts Hugh III of Maine and Galeran of Meulan, Odo tried to capture Tillières but they were repulsed and found refuge within the fortifications of Dreux. Then William of Jumièges says that to help him fight Odo Richard sent a request for Scandinavian mercenaries to come to assist him. Soon Olaf and Lacman come to Rouen but not before first having attacked Brittany and seized the town of Dol. This is usually dated to *c.*1013.[3] Duke Richard welcomed the Scandinavians, but according to William of Jumièges, and to use Pierre Bauduin's words, 'the king Robert II, fearing the ravages of the Scandinavians, convokes an assembly of the magnates of the kingdom at Coudres,[4] where Odo and Richard expose their differences. Peace is finally concluded: Odo keeps the castle of Dreux, in return Richard obtains the land which had been taken from him and the castle of Tillières remains in his power. Richard returns to his Scandinavian allies, on whom he lavishes gifts before their departure'.[5] All of this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 16.

Dudo would have lived through these events and he might well have heard of them during one of his visits to Richard II's court. When writing *De moribus* is it not at least possible that Dudo thought he would take these events and use them for a story about Richard II's father set in the early 960s? There are many obvious and striking similarities between the story found in the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* and that found in *De moribus*. First, both have to do with fights between the counts of Rouen, Richard I and his son Richard II, and the 'House of Blois', Theobald the Trickster and his grandson Odo II count of Blois.[6] Second, if the fight between

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[1] Mathilde was certainly dead by 1005 when Odo II was already remarried to Ermengarde of Auvergne; see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182 and n. 18.

[2] For Mathilde's *dot* see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 181-82, 184-89; *idem*, 'Du bon usage de la *dos* dans la Normandie ducale', p. 439. For a quite sceptical note see O. Guyotjeannin, *Episcopus et cornes. Affirmation et déclin de la seigneurie épiscopale au nord du royaume de France (Beauvais, Noyon, Xe - début XIIIe siècle)* (Paris-Geneva, 1987), p. 22, n. 96: 'La réalité de ce don en dot, prétexte à une invasion normande, reste sujette à caution.'

[3] For which see Chapter 16.

[4] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182, my translation. J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie* (Rennes, 1989), p. 98, says: 'Les ravages causés par les Vikings du temps du comte Thibaud étaient encore dans les mémoires.' Maybe so, yet only if these earlier ravages actually happened.

[5] My translations. I borrow all this summary from P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182. William of Jumièges's texts are reproduced, in part, in Chapter 16.

[6] The fact that there were supposedly two major confrontations between the 'House of Blois' and the 'Normans' of the two Richards has sometimes been used as 'evidence' for a supposed long-running animosity and even hatred between the two houses dating from the 960s. Whilst the two houses were often competitors, particularly in the

Theobald and Richard I had anything to do with the dower given by William Longsword to his wife Liégeard who had subsequently married Theobald (which is possible) then both fights might seem to have been about disputes over who would hold on to the dowry/dower properties, the husband or the wife's family. Third, when both Richard I and Richard II were experiencing difficulties they both called in Scandinavian 'mercenaries' to help them. Fourth, in William of Jumièges's case these mercenaries had supposedly first raided Brittany and captured Dol before coming to Rouen,[1] whilst we have seen that many elements of Dudo's story concerning the 960s (and indeed the 930s) also point in the same direction: to Brittany and the Cotentin. Fifth, in both cases the grandees of Francia were concerned about the ravages these Scandinavians had made or were making in the case of Dudo in his 'nearly five-year' gap, or might continue to make in the case of William of Jumièges. These Frankish magnates, therefore, each convoked an assembly to try get rid of the dangerous Northmen - in the times of Richard I and Richard II respectively. Sixth, both Richards only managed to get the Scandinavians to leave by lavishing gifts on them.

Of course, the canon of Saint-Quentin could not have taken his story from William of Jumièges's later *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* which was first written in the 1050s, but both could certainly have been derived from oral reports circulating in Norman ducal circles around the first years of the eleventh century. Overall, knowing Dudo's track record for creating elaborate novel-like stories from historical bits and pieces, whether from earlier annals or oral tradition, the deafening silence of Flodoard concerning a supposed five-year ravaging of Francia in the 960s and the similarities with events in Dudo's own time as outlined above there are at least grounds for suspecting that Dudo's whole story of Richard's 'Danish mercenaries' is pure fiction, it might even not have happened at all.

Finally, regarding Dudo's story of some of the Northmen who did not want to accept Richard I's offer of land and riches and who had not wanted to convert to Christianity, Dudo says that for 'those who desired to wander in the ways of paganism' Richard 'had them guided to Spain by guides from Coutances'.[2] He adds: 'In the course of this voyage they captured eighteen cities, and won for themselves what they found in them. Raiding here and there, they attacked

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Évrecin, in fact in the late tenth century (*c*. 995) Richard I and Theobald the Trickster's son Count Odo I had fought side by side against Fulk the Black (of the House of Anjou), see Richer of Reims, *Histories*, ed. and trans. Lake, vol. 2, book 4, chap. 90, pp. 390-93; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 184 and n. 31. Any lingering animosities could swiftly be put to one side when needs must.

[1] Whether these Northmen came to Dol in Brittany before or after arriving at Rouen, or even in the late 900s, which is less likely, is discussed in great detail in Chapter 16.

[2] Dudo: ed. J. Lair p. 287; trans. E. Christiansen, p. 162.

Spain, and began afflicting it severely with burning and plundering,'[1] this will all be discussed more in Chapter 15.

Nevertheless, there seems little doubt that some Northmen who had previously been somewhere in northern France had then proceeded to the Iberian Peninsula where they first appear in the record in 966. Whether these Northmen were those who Dudo of Saint-Quentin describes or whether they were simply other Scandinavian 'pirates' from Coutances in the Cotentin or thereabouts is a rather moot point.

Summary

This chapter has been concerned with the ostensibly limited subject of a fleet of Northmen attacking coastal Brittany and then the town of Nantes in the late 950s. However, this thesis is all about connections, and this has rather inevitably led us to a rather long detour to what would become Normandy and to the British Isles. The Northmen responsible for these attacks were decidedly not Richard of Rouen's men, as is often contended, and it is also unlikely that these attacks had anything to do with the so-called Norman War, a war which was completely overblown, if maybe not invented, by Dudo of Saint-Quentin. After having read the foregoing analysis, Pierre Bauduin commented: 'Je suis assez convaincu par le fait qu'il faut séparer maintenant les deux (guerre contre Thibaud et attaques « normandes » en Bretagne).'[2]

It is much more likely that the fleet involved originally came from Britain in particular from York (*Deira*) in the mid-950s, the Scandinavian leaders of which had been finally expelled immediately before the attacks on Nantes and Brittany happened. In terms of where the Northmen who attacked Brittany and Nantes went afterwards, they were probably not the supposed auxiliaries called in by Richard of Rouen, these Northmen may in fact not have existed at all, however they could have been those who established a base or bases in the Cotentin. An ultimate Iberian destination for them from 966 is very possible but still far from certain.

[1] *Ibid*.
[2] Personal communication.

Chapter 15

INCURSIONS INTO GASCONY IN THE LATE TENTH CENTURY?

In this chapter a very obscure and most difficult question will be explored: Were there any Scandinavian incursions to Bordeaux and into Gascony at the end of the 970s which culminated in a battle in about 982 in the Landes where William Sanche,[1] the count of Gascony, defeated the Northmen to such an extent that they never returned to the region?

The idea for this goes back at least as far as Pierre de Marca in 1640 and it has been repeated on and off and in different forms ever since, before reaching its most complete elaboration and expression in the works of Renée Mussot-Goulard and those others who have followed her lead.

The reason why this question is extremely difficult is because all the 'evidence' adduced to support the whole conception is found in a small number of highly disputed and usually late 'local sources', most particularly in a pseudo-charter regarding the foundation or restoration of the monastery of Saint-Sever and in a part of the so-called *History of the Abbots of Condom* (*Historia Abbatiae Condomiensis*),[2] sometimes supplemented by a few other rather suspect charters. We will examine all of these texts in what follows, or at least those elements of them which refer to, or may be referring to, Northmen.

But before doing so let us look at what we do know of the movements of Scandinavian fleets around this time to see whether, at least hypothetically, there may be a place, both geographically and chronologically, where and when such an incursion could have happened.[3]

Raids in the Iberian Peninsula: 966-972

In the previous chapter it was mentioned how at least according to Dudo of Saint-Quentin some Northmen on the Seine had not wanted to convert to Christianity and take lands offered to them by Richard I, and so, says Dudo, for 'those who desired to wander in the ways of paganism' Richard 'had them guided to Spain by guides from Coutances'.[4] Dudo adds: 'In the course of this voyage they captured eighteen cities, and won for themselves what they found in them. Raiding here and there, they attacked Spain, and began afflicting it severely with burning and

[1] I will use the French form Sanche here although he could equally well be called William Sánchez/Sanchez (that is the son of Sancho) as he usually is in Spanish and English historiography.
[2] Sometimes called the 'Cartulaire de Condom'.
[3] In Appendix 3 two late stories concerning the foundation of the monastery at Maillezais in the Vendée and the construction of forts around Périgueux are introduced.
[4] Dudo: ed. J. Lair p. 287; trans. E. Christiansen, p. 162.

plundering.'[1] This departure from the Seine for Spain if it really happened can be dated to either 965 or early 966.[2] Then Dudo tells us that:

> But at last the Spaniards put together an army of exasperated rustics, and met the Northmen in battle. And in the rage of Mars the Spaniards turned their backs to the foreigners, after there had been a terrible slaughter. And on the third day, the Northmen went back to the field of battle, and when they were turning over the dead to rob them of their clothing, they found the parts of the bodies of the dusky ones and the Ethiopians lying next to the ground to be whiter than snow; but they noticed that the rest of the body had kept the original colour.[3]

Leaving to one side the question of from where Dudo may have derived this story of an expedition to 'Spain',[4] what is certainly true is that there do seem to have been some incursions into the Iberian Peninsula which started in the early summer of 966 and continued until 972. Ann Christys has provided an excellent detailed appraisal of these raids and the Christian and

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] See Chapter 14. Although this dating is rather circular as it is based on reports of the Northmen's arrival in the Iberian Peninsula in 966. R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', in *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne pendant le moyen age*, vol. II (Leiden, 1860), pp. 271-390, at pp. 301-15**,** identifies these Northmen leaving 'Normandy' with those we find at Lisbon in 966, a view followed by many subsequent historians including A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 81 -82.

[3] Dudo, *ibid.* E. Christiansen, *Dudo of St Quentin. History of the Normans*, p. 223, n. 453, says that this is 'a tale broadly confirmed by Spanish sources'; see also H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin*, pp. 387-8. R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', pp. 301-5, suggests this battle was fought against the Moors rather than the Christian Spaniards (Galicians), indeed he identifies it with the battle fought at Lisbon in 966 as described by Ibn Iḏārī in his *Kitāb al-bayān al-mughrib fī ākhbār mulūk al-andalus wa'l-maghrib* (*Book of the Amazing Story of the History of the Kings of al-Andalus and Maghreb*); for the English translation of the relevant passage see A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 87. William of Jumièges in his *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, and following as usual Dudo of Saint-Quentin, wrote (*GND*, ed. E. van Houts, IV. 17, p. 129): 'After the duke [Richard] had brought these negotiations to a happy conclusion, he converted very many of the heathens to the Christian faith by his holy words, and he sent those who decided to remain heathen to Spain, where they fought many battles and destroyed many cities', to which E. van Houts adds that (*ibid.*, p. 129, n. 5) 'this account of Dudo and William of Jumièges of the Danes in Spain is confirmed by Arab sources on the battle of Lisbon in 966', referencing here R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne'. A. Christys (*ibid.*, pp. 82-84) rather strangely (and possibly wrongly) interprets Dudo's story as meaning that 'an army of peasants' drove away the Northmen "after there had been a terrible slaughter"', but suggests this is probably referring to the 'bishops of Santiago' who had 'repelled the maurauders'.

[4] According to E. van Houts, 'Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 6 (1983), pp. 107-121, at pp. 110-11: 'Obviously we have here a description of an encounter between Vikings and people of darker skin than the Scandinavians, like Negroes, and not only dark in those parts of the body exposed to the sun, i.e. the faces and the hands [...]. I have discussed this passage because of the fact that Dudo used an eyewitness account which is most probably of Scandinavian origin.' This supposed 'eyewitness account' begs a number of pertinent questions. E. Christiansen (*Dudo of St Quentin. History of the Normans*, p. 223, n. 453) suggests that rather than being 'an eyewitness account' of Scandinavian origin Dudo's story implies that 'some raiders brought the story home', but this too begs numerous questions, for example where is 'home' meant to have been?

Muslim sources we have for them, as also have many recent Spanish and Portuguese historians.[1] I will not attempt to cover the same ground here. However, whether or not the Northmen responsible for these attacks had come from the Seine via (or with guides from) Coutances, which Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story suggests,[2] or whether they came from elsewhere (perhaps from the Cotentin),[3] in either case the Northmen involved would certainly have had to sail along the coasts of Aquitaine to the Bay of Biscay to eventually reach Galicia.

To cut a very long story short, what is reasonably clear from both Christian and Muslim sources of different degrees of reliability is that between the early summer of 966 and 972[4] there were several raids in Christian Galicia and in Muslim Iberia - from Lisbon down to the Algarve. We will return later to one early eleventh-century report of an incursion in 968 into 'the lands of Santiago' in Galicia supposedly led by a chieftain called *Gundered*. These Northmen were eventually 'forced to go out from Galicia' after which a Count *Guillelmus Sánchez/Guillermo Sánchez* (*Guillelmus Sancionis*) 'in the name of the Lord, and with the aid of the great Apostle Santiago whose lands they had devastated, went out with a great army and with divine aid killed all the pagans, including their king, and burned their ships'.[5] The similarity between this story and those found in texts from Saint-Sever and Condom, which are discussed below, is most striking.

Hélio Pires observes that: 'There may be a pattern in the fact that Viking activity in western Iberia appears to spike in the 960s and 970s, at a time when the attacks in France had decreased,

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[1] Cf. A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 65-93; *eadem*, 'The Vikings in the south through Arab eyes'; H. Pires, 'Viking Attacks in Western Iberia', pp. 161-64; *idem*, *Os Vikings em Portugal e na Galiza: As incursões nórdicas medievais no ocidente ibérico* (Sintra, 2017), pp. 87-101; *idem*, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147*, pp. 129-54; J. C. Sánchez Pardo, 'Los ataques vikingos y su influencia en la Galicia de los siglos IX-XI', *Anuario Brigantino*, 33 (2010), pp. 57-86, at pp. 67-70; R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', pp. 301-15. For some other discussions and interpretations of these raids see: E. Morales Romero (ed.), *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la Peninsula Ibérica en los los siglos IX-XI* (Madrid, 2004); *idem*, *Os viquingos en Galicia* (Santiago, 1997); E. Chao Espina, *Los Normandos en Galicia y otros temas medievales* (La Coruña, 1977); J. Ferreiro Alemparte, *Arribadas de normandos y cruzados a las costas de la Península Ibérica* (Madrid, 1999); V. Almazán, 'Los Vikingos en Galicia', in *Los vikingos en la Península Ibérica*, Fundación Reina Isabel de Dinamarca (Madrid, 2004); *idem*, *Gallaecia scandinavica: introducción ó estudio das relacións galaico-escandinavas durante a Idade Media* (Vigo, 1986). Most recently see also many of the excellent articles in M. J. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim* (Porto, 2018) some of which I will reference later in this chapter and which include many references to other Spanish and Portuguese works on the subject of the 'vikings' in Iberia.

[2] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 81-82, thinks this was the case, as do V. Almazán, 'Los Vikingos en Galicia', p. 46, and F. Alonso Romero, 'La navegación e itinerario del ejército normando de Gunderedo (968-969)', in M. J. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim*, pp. 53-86, at pp. 62-64, amongst many others, some of whom will be noted later.

[3] As was discussed in the previous chapter.

[4] The Northmen seem to have left by September of 972, at least as far as Santiago de Compostela; for which see A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 91.

[5] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 83-84. J. Pérez de Urbel, *Sampiro: su crónica y la monarquía leonesa en el siglo X* (Madrid, 1952), pp. 340-42; J. Pérez de Urbel and A. González Ruiz-Zorrilla (eds.), *Historia Silense: edición crítica e introducción* (Madrid, 1959), p. 171.

the Norse occupation of Brittany had ended, and before new waves of pirates struck England in the 980s and 990s.'[1] This is a most pertinent thought.

All these raids into Iberia which had been opposed by the Christian Galicians and by the Muslims of Cordoba are characterised by Ann Christys as follows: 'They were locally disruptive, but most likely sporadic; it is difficult to argue that Vikings were a significant threat to the peace of Iberia in the tenth century,'[2] although it is clear that the raids between 966 and 972 are indeed 'genuine'.[3]

But after 972 where had the Northmen involved then gone? A report of Ibn Ḥayyān in his *Muqtabas* says that the Northmen had left Muslim Iberia at least as far as 'Santiago' (de Compostela) by the autumn of 972,[4] and this would certainly suggest that they were heading back to the North.

The next time we hear of any raids in the northern parts of Europe is in 980.[5] In regard to England, Simon Keynes writes:

> The Viking raids which beset the English people during the reign of King Æthelred the Unready (978-1016) can be divided, for the sake of convenience, into four successive phases. The first phase covers the period 980-91, and witnessed the resumption of raiding activity after the long interlude in the tenth century. Some of these raids seem to have originated in the Irish Sea and others in Scandinavia; and while they do not appear to have been on a scale which occasioned much local disruption, they were taken seriously enough to have precipitated a peace process between England and Normandy in 990-1, perhaps implying that some of the raiders were using Normandy as a safe haven.[6]

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[1] H. Pires, 'Viking Attacks in Western Iberia', p. 162.
[2] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 92-93.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 91.
[4] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 91.
[5] I am excluding here all the raiding activity in the Irish Sea zone around this time, for an overview of which see in the first intstance C. Etchingham*, Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap. 12. Furthermore, one could mention the viking-ship burial on the Île de Groix in Brittany which is usually dated to the second half of the tenth century (although this dating is not completely sure). If such a dating is correct then it might have some connection with the raids discussed in this chapter. On the other hand, it may be related to the raids on Brittany and Nantes in the late 950s which were discussed in the previous chapter; the two are not completely mutually exclusive.
[6] S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England, c. 790-1016', pp. 73-74. For the 'peace process between England and Normandy' see H. Zimmermann (ed.), *Papsturkunden 896-1046*, *vol.1: 896-996* (Vienna, 1984) , no. 307, pp. 595-97; William of Malmesbury: *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans., R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford, 1998-1999), vol. 2, p. 166, vol. 1, pp. 276-78; W. Stubbs, ed. *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi, De gesta regum Anglorum*, 2 vols, Rolls Series, 90 (London, 1887-1888), vol. 1, book 2, § 166, pp. 269-71; *Memorials of saint Dunstan archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London, 1874), pp. 397-98; F. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971), pp. 375-76. It was also Frank Stenton (*ibid*., p. 375) who suggested that Rouen may have been a safe haven: 'The Norman aristocracy, still conscious of its Scandinavian origin, was well disposed to the men of its own stock who were trying their fortune in the narrow seas, and the Norman ports were open to ships' companies returning from raids in England.' B. Hudson, *Viking Pirates and Christian Princes*, p. 67, says: 'Rouen was famous as a place where loot from

Perhaps this first period should not really be seen as a 'phase' because the nature of these attacks was quite different. In 991, just months after the 'peace process' had been agreed between England and Normandy at Rouen on 1 March 991, it was a very imposing fleet of ninety-three ships that arrived in south-east England commanded by the future king of Norway Óláfr Tryggvason, which culminated in August of this year in the famous Battle of Maldon, and eventually in 994 in the payment of a huge 'Danegeld'.[1] In 988 Watchet on the Somerset coast was attacked leading to the death of the Devonshire thane Goda and a great slaughter.[2] But it was the raids during the period 980-982 that are of most interest for us here. Sir Frank Stenton says: 'They [the Northmen] visited Hampshire, Thanet, and Cheshire in 980, Devon and Cornwall in 981, and Dorset in 982.'[3] Regarding 980, the information is found in the Abingdon 'C' manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which says:

> And in the same year 980 Southampton was ravaged by a raiding ship-army [*scipherige*] and most of the town-dwellers killed or taken prisoner. And the same year the land of Thanet was raided; and the same year Cheshire was raided by a northern raiding ship-army [*norð scipherige*].[4]

Viking raids could be dispersed. This business was so profitable that even papal intervention could not bring it to a halt. Pope John XV was called upon to reconcile Æthelraed of England and Richard 1 of Normandy in 991 with an agreement that they not give aid to each others' enemies (a polite way of saying that Richard would not help the Vikings raid England).' This idea of Rouen or elsewhere in future Normandy being a 'safe haven' goes back to J. Steenstrup, *Études préliminaires pour servir à l'histoire des Normands et de leurs invasions*, *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de Normandie*, 10 (1882), pp. 185-418, esp. pp. 296-97 (a work which is a translation of vol. 1 of his 1876 *Normannerne*), and before him to E. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England*, vol. 1, *The Preliminary History to the Election of Eadward the Confessor*, 2nd edn (London, 1870), pp. 283-84. For a very good recent treatment of the whole subject see P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes : autour du traité de 991', in A. Gautier and C. Martin (eds.), *Échanges, communications et réseaux dans le Haut Moyen Âge. Études offertes à Stéphane Lebecq* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 197-210.

[1] See F. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn, pp. 376-78. *ASC* A *s.a.* 993 [=991], ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 126: 'Here in this year Olaf came with ninety-three ships to Folkestone, and raided round about it, and then went from there to Sandwich, and so from there to Ipswich, and overran all that, and so to Maldon. And Ealdorman Bryhtnoth came against them there with his army and fought with them, and they killed the ealdorman there and had possession of the place of slaughter. And [994] afterwards they made peace with them and the king received him [Olaf] at the bishop's hands by the advice of Sigeric, bishop of the inhabitants of Kent, and Ælfeah, bishop of Winchester', 'Her on ðissum geare com Unlaf mid þrim 7 hund nigontigon scipum to Stane 7 forhergedon þæt onytan 7 for ða ðanon to Sandwic 7 swa ðanon to Gipeswic 7 þæt eall ofereode 7 swa to Mældune; 7 him ðær com togeanes Byrhtnoð ealdorman mid his fyrde 7 him wið gefeaht, 7 hy þone ealdorman þær ofslogon, 7 wælstowe geweald ahtan. 7 him man nam syððan frið wið [994], 7 hine nam se cing syððan to bisceopes handa ðurh Sirices lare Cantware bisceopes, 7 Ælfeages Wincæstre biscop.'

[2] *ASC s.a.* 987-978, MSS C and E.

[3] F. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn, p. 375.

[4] *ASC* C 980: ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 124. '7 on þam ylcan geare wæs Suðhamtun forhergod fram scipherige 7 seo burhwaru mæst ofslegen 7 gehæft, 7 þy ilcan geare wæs Tenetland gehergod, 7 þy ilcan geare wæs Legeceasterscir gehergod fram norð scipherige.'

Manuscripts D and E of the *ASC* say just (and *s.a.* 981) that, 'Here first came 7 ships and raided Southampton'.[1] One should note here the very small-scale nature of this raid - supposedly undertaken by just seven ships. In 981 the only raid recorded was on Padstow on the northern coast of Cornwall in which year also 'great harm was done everywhere along the sea-coast, both in Devon and in Cornwall'.[2] And then in 982 we read in the Abingdon C manuscript: 'Here in this year 3 ships of Vikings came up in Dorset and raided in Portland.'[3] Again we should notice the, just, '3 ships'. As was seen above it was not until six years later (in 988) that there was another attack in southern England.

These facts have been very briefly introduced here rather than later because in regard to these small-scale raids in England over the period 980 to 982 it is not at all clear that all these raids originated in Scandinavia or Ireland,[4] or that these raids were made, to use Peter Hunter Blair's words, by 'small bands of adventurers who sought to escape from the control which Harold Gormsson had established over Denmark',[5] which is a complete assumption.

The attack on Cheshire in 980 was most likely conducted by the Manx-Hebridean chieftain Guðrøðr Haraldsson (or the Gaelicised form *Gothbrith Mac Arailt* as the Irish sources call him), who was embroiled in the politics of Gwynedd in this year.[6] Hence it did not originate in Ireland itself. In regard to the very small attacks on Thanet, Southampton, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall in 980, 981 and 982, at least some of these raids on southern England could have originated elsewhere, even perhaps having been made by some of the Northmen who were last heard of in 972 in Iberia when they were heading back northwards.[7] This is just a possibility but a plausible one nonetheless.

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[1] *ASC* D and E 981 [=980]: 'Her comon ærest þa .vii. scipu and gehergoden Hamtun.'

[2] *ASC* 981, MS 'C': 'Her on þys geare wæs Sancte Petrocesstow forhergod, 7 þy ilcan geare wæs micel hearm gedon gehwær be þam særiman, ægþer ge on Defenum ge on Wealum.'

[3] *ASC* 982, MS 'C': 'Her on þys geare comon upp on Dorsætum iii. scypu wicinga 7 hergodon on Portlande.'

[4] Remember that Simon Keynes says just 'some' of them probably did.

[5] P. Hunter Blair, *Anglo-Saxon England. An Introduction* (New York, 1996), p. 91; this was originally published as *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1959 and 1977).

[6] For 980 the Welsh *Brut y Tywysogion* reports that Guðrøðr Haraldsson raided Lleyn and Anglesey in North Wales in alliance with Custennin ap Iago, a Gwynedd dynast (see C. Etchingham, 'North Wales, Ireland and the Isles: the Insular Viking Zone', p. 175; *idem*, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap. 12). Regarding my suggestion here, in recent communication C. Etchingham says: 'In the context of affairs in that year, the balance of probability is that Guðrøðr Haraldsson or Gothbrith Mac Arailt [...] was responsible for the raid on *Legeceasterscir*.' With regard to the rare use of the word *norð scipherige*, meaning either 'northern ship raiding army' or 'northern raiding ship-army', Etchingham also analysed this (in personal communication) and without going into all the details he concludes: 'If Gothbrith Mac Arailt raided Cheshire in the year of his embroilment in the politics of Gwynedd - raiding *Llyn a Mon* together with Custennin ap Iago - then *norðscipherige* could indicate the same general "Hiberno-Norse" character that Quanrud deduces from the usage of ASC in the earlier tenth century, or could point more specifically to the geographical origin of Gothbrith's forces in Man and the Isles (and not of course in this instance Ireland) - which would indeed be very much "north" from the perspective of Cheshire.'

[7] We will consider the possibility that these Northmen had made an incursion into Gascony in the intervening period in what follows.

Leaving all of this to one side, and returning to Aquitaine and Gascony, both chronologically and geographically it is theoretically not at all completely out of the question that after leaving northern Iberia in 972 or sometime thereafter the Northmen involved had then made a landfall around Bordeaux and/or in Gascony proper, and even if they had not done so they would certainly have had to navigate along the Aquitanian littoral to go to wherever they were headed.

But what is the evidence that they may have actually done so? Let us start with a story about William 'the Good', count of Bordeaux.

William 'the Good' count of Bordeaux and the Northmen

In a charter in the cartulary of the abbey of Sainte-Croix of Bordeaux we find a story about the refoundation of the Merovingian abbey of Sainte-Croix supposedly dating to 977.[1] At the end of this charter one of the signatories is given as *Guillermus Burdegalensium comes*, 'William Count of Bordeaux', but in the 'notice' which precedes the charter we find it said that this was *Regnante Guilelmo comite quod vocatur Bonus in civitate Burdegalensis*, 'In the reign of Count William, who is called the Good, in the *civitas* of Bordeaux'. The added 'surname' or epithet *Bonus* which does not appear at the end of the charter may have been, as R.-A. Sénac thinks, a later interpolation borrowed 'par une interprétation abusive' from the text of a confirmatory bull of Pope Urban II dated 27 April 1099, where we find the words: "'roborantes quod Guillelmus Burdegalensium comes ... bonae memoriae" (=défunt, feu).'[2] If true this would certainly indicate that the 'charter' had been reworked and embellished after this date. F. Boutoulle concludes that this charter 'a été refaite soit à la fin du XIe siècle, soit au XIIe siècle'.[3]

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[1] This charter is no. 1 in *Cartulaire de l'abbaye Sainte-Croix de Bordeaux*, ed. A. Ducaunès-Duval, *Archives Historiques de la Gironde*, vol. 27 (Bordeaux, 1892), and no. 99 in *Gascon Register A*, eds. G.-P. Cuttino and J.-P. Trabut-Cussac (London, 1975). Cuttino and Trabut-Cussac date this charter to 1027, and it is dated, more fancifully, by the *Gallia Christiana* to 902. R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 131, n. 14, and p. 29, says it should be dated to 977 because (p. 29) 'dès 978 l'archevêque de Bordeaux n'est plus Aldebert présent dans cet acte', but seemingly rather contradictorily she says elsewhere (p. 131, n. 14) that Aldebert was the archbishop of Bordeaux from 977 to 988 (does this really mean 978?), referencing on both occasions B. Guillemain, *Le Diocèse de Bordeaux*; meaning R. Darricau, B. Guillemain and J.-B. Marquette (eds.), *Histoire des diocèces de France. Le diocèse de Bordeaux* (Paris, 1974). In Guillemain's work in the list of the archbishops of Bordeaux he gives a *Gumbaldus*/Gombaud in 988, although whether this Gombaud is the same person as the *Gumbaldus*/Gombaud (Count William Sanche's brother or half-brother) is unclear. R. Mussot-Goulard says (*ibid.*, p. 132, n. 49), 'Comme les cartulaires ne soufflent mot de cette éventuelle promotion [of William Sanche's brother Gombaud to the archbishopric of Bordeaux], tout laisse à penser que Gombaud de Bordeaux n'est pas le même que Gombaud de Gascogne'; she adds: 'La tradition, qui indique une "fosse-Gombaud " à Taller (Landes) le tient pour mort dans la bataille de Taller.' I am not knowledgeable enough about the early archbishops of Bordeaux to offer any worthwhile opinion on this matter but I will return to this supposed battle 'of Taller' and the *fosse-Gombaud* later.

[2] R.-A. Sénac, 'Essai de prosopographie d'abbés de monastères gascons (945-1059)', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (Dax, 1983), pp. 603-30, at p. 618, n. 48. See *Gascon Register A*, eds. G.-P. Cuttino and J.-P. Trabut-Cussac, no. 79.

[3] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', pp. 29-30.

Sénac also says that the qualification attributed to William as a saint by certain early authors of the Bordelais perhaps comes from a confusion of this count with William, the count and duke of Toulouse, who died in 812.[1] It is most noticeable that it is actually in the clearly later interpolated initial 'notice' where we find the mention of some former and unnamed 'pagans' who at some not defined point in the past had destroyed the Merovingian abbey of Sainte-Croix (*a paganis destructa*). Throughout the early medieval period such stories were often added into charters (whether genuine or not) concerning the foundation or restoration of churches and monasteries, but these are often just *topoï* particularly in such vague cases as we have here. However, and more importantly, nowhere in this text is it said that in or before 977 this William of Bordeaux had a 'first engagement' with the Northmen, nor that he had been captured by them and subsequently been ransomed by William Sanche of Gascony, nor that in a second engagement he was killed, as Mussot-Goulard would interpret the whole dossier.[2] In her interpretation:

> Un premier engagement eut lieu, où Guillaume, comte de Bordeaux, fut fait prisonnier. Les Normands, selon une formule tout à fait habituelle demandèrent une rançon. Celle-ci fut payée par le cousin du prisonnier, le comte de Gascogne, Guillaume-Sanche. Afin d'obtenir les marchandises précieuses demandées par les Normands, il se rendit au monastère de Condom qui livra vases d'or, d'argent, candélabres, encensoirs. Les Normands étaient intéressés par les objets d'art, en métal pur, qui constituaient, un élément de commerce tout préparé, une bonne marchandise. Il faut croire que l'abbaye de Condom avait suffisamment de richesses. Elle en concéda à Guillaume-Sanche qui put donc délivrer Guillaume le Bon. Le comte engagea à l'abbaye de Condom si généreuse, le domaine de Tambielle, au Nord-Est de l'abbaye.

Mussot-Goulard then continues with the statement:

> C'était là, déjà, une importante secousse infligée de la part des Normands. Mais ils attaquèrent de nouveau, car il est bien vrai qu'en Gascogne comme ailleurs, aucun *vergeld* [*sic*] n'eut jamais définitivement raison de leurs besoins. Il est vraisemblable que le duc des Gascons, comte de Bordeaux, fait prisonnier dans un premier combat, trouva la mort en combattant de nouveau contre eux.[3]

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[1] *Ibid.*, R.-A. Sénac.
[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Le princes de Gascogne*, pp. 131-32, p. 151; *eadem*, 'La bataille de Taller', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (Dax, 1983), pp. 543-62, at p. 551.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 131.

The idea that William of Bordeaux was captured and ransomed actually comes from a 'charter' found in the so-called *History of the Abbots of Condom.* This Condom charter reads:

> Ad ultimum restat Tamvilla quam beatus Petrus tali modo promeruisse dinoscitur. Quodam tempore Guillelmo Burdegalensi comite capto, meus patruus Guillelmus Sancius cujus superius mentionem, ei subvenire studuit et ideo ab hoc monasterio plurima donaria accepta in vasis aureis et argenteis, candelabris quoque et turibulis seu aliis ornamentis, ea in amici sui liberatione protulit offerens Sancto Petro quasi pro satisfactione hunc locum sui juris, de quo loquimur, Tambilla nuncupatum [...].[1]

The Bordeaux historian Frédéric Boutoulle is quite right to point out that this donation by William Sanche of the *villa* of Tambielle to the abbey of Condom in recompense for the ransom they had paid for the release of William of Bordeaux does not actually say that those responsible for his capture and ransom demand were Northmen, or even pagans, or even that he was killed in a later combat against them, all suggested by Mussot-Goulard,[2] and he adds that William's capture 'peut aussi être liée à un de [the] conflits entre puissants dont l'époque est remplie'.[3]

One could also add, although we should perhaps not push the idea, that it is rather strange that when some Northmen had really captured Bordeaux, in early 848, we are told by the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* that 'the Northmen captured the city of Bordeaux by night as well as its duke, William'.

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[1] Cf. *Historia abbatiae Condomiensis nunc episcopatus*, in L. d'Achery, ed. *Spicilegium sive collectio veterum aliquot scriptorum*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1723), p. 586; BNF MS Latin 5652, fol. 40; F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30, n. 43.

[2] R. Mussot-Goulard ('La bataille de Taller', p. 551 and nn. 42, 43; *eadem*, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 130-32 and notes) argues that William of Bordeaux died in November of 976/977, and was succeeded in the *ducatu*s of Bordeaux by William Sanche count of Gascony by 977. This is all based on a now lost inscription at Saint-Quitterie d'Aire and a necrology of Saint-Sever both of which give no year, combined with an 'act of foundation' of the monastery of La Réole (dep. Gironde), supposedly by William Sanche's brother Gombaud (*Gumbaldus*) in 977, where we find one of those present being *Guillelmus Sancii dux Guasconum*, hence indicating William 'the Good' of Bordeaux was dead by this time and been replaced by his cousin William Sanche (cf. R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 28-29, 150-51). But, in fact, this 'act of foundation' is most likely a forgery from 1081 (cf. F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 29, and the references in nn. 40, 41). This date of death of William of Bordeaux may be correct although I will not explore this complex dossier more here. However that as R. Mussot-Goulard says ('La bataille de Taller', p. 551) William's death 'fut aussi vraisemblablement liée au problème normand', and that, 'Il faut bien qu'il [William of Bordeaux] ait péri sur les bords de l'Adour, dans un combat qui fut une défaite', is just speculation or wishful thinking. For more on La Réole and its foundation charter see *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire,* eds., M. Prou and A. Vidier, vol. 1 (Paris, 1907), no. LXII, pp. 153-67; C. Higounet, 'Aux origines du prieuré de la ville de La Réole', *Les Cahiers du Réolais*, 19 (1954), pp. 3-6; *idem*, 'A propos de la fondation du prieuré de La Réole', in C. Higounet (ed.), *De Fleury-sur-Loire à Saint-Pierre de la Réole, mille ans d'histoire monastique (977-1977*), *Actes du Colloque du millénaire de la fondation du Prieuré de La Réole* (Bordeaux, 1980), pp. 7-11.

[3] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30.

In summary so far, although it is possible to imagine a scenario such as Musset-Goulard proposes, the charter in the cartulary of Sainte-Croix even when combined with the 'charter' found in the *History of the Abbots of Condom* is not sufficient or reliable enough evidence to enable us to propose such a *déroulement* as being historically factual. It is not impossible that things had actually played out like this but that they really did so is just conjecture.[1]

A pseudo foundation charter of Saint-Sever

A late and very composite 'pseudo-charter' of Saint-Sever,[2] probably put together during the last decades of the eleventh century, or maybe even in the first decades of the twelfth century, has been used by some historians to support their belief that Northmen were in Gascony in the late tenth century and that they were defeated by the Gascon count William Sanche.[3]

Before looking at this pseudo or *faux* foundation charter itself, which comes from the monastery of Saint-Sever founded (or less likely restored) by William Sanche supposedly to fulfil a vow he had made before he had confronted and defeated some Northmen, we need to say just a few words about another charter concerning the sale of land at the site of the future monastery of Saint-Sever in an 'old cartulary' called the 'Red Book' by the seventeenth-century Benedictine P.-D. du Buisson,[4] which it seems was assembled at the monastery of Saint-Sever in 1580.[5] This charter is a late reworking and embellishment of a now lost, and undoubtedly originally quite short, charter for the purchase of land by Count William Sanche, on which to

[1] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30, also discusses late texts such as the *Baptista Salvatoris* written after 1136 by a canon of Bazas, which is a story of the relics of John the Baptist of Bazas but mentions the 'Northmen' (for which see Dom Aurélien, *L'Apôtre saint Martial et les fondateurs apostoliques des églises des Gaules. Baptista Salvatoris, ou le Sang de saint Jean à Bazas peu d'années après l'ascension de Notre seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Toulouse, 1880), at pp. 289-91 for the Northmen, and, in general, J.-B. Marquette, 'La visite de Urbain II à Bazas et la consécration de la cathédrale à saint Jean-Baptiste (mai 1096)', in M. Agostino (ed.), *La cathédrale Saint-André, reflet de neuf siècles d'histoire et de vie bordelaises* (Bordeaux, 2001), pp. 21-46, at pp. 22-28), and the *Chronique de Bazas/Titulus Vasatensium* written, indeed quite definitely 'fabricated', in the very early seventeenth century by the canon of Bazas and archdeacon of Bezaume Jérôme Géraud Dupuy but based on the *Baptista Salvatoris* and in part on the *History of the Abbots of Condom* (for which see in the first instance É. Piganeau (ed.), 'Chronique de Bazas', *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde*, 15 (1874), pp. 1-66, at pp. 21-22; J.-B. Marquette, 'La visite de Urbain II à Bazas', p. 22).

[2] Although one should not really prejudge matters, that the relevant part of the charter concerned here is a 'pseudo-charter', or a 'faux' or a 'falsification', has been so well established by an array of eminent scholars over the years that I think we can accept it as a fact; many (but not all) of the analyses of these scholars are referenced in what follows. The composite nature of this text was demonstrated by P. Aimès, *Conjectures sur l'origine de la ville de Saint-Sever* (Nice, 1932), pp. 6-8, 14-17.

[3] For example, most recently by R. Mussot-Goulard as we will see, but the whole idea goes back to P. de Marca.

[4] P.-D. du Buisson [1681], *Historiæ monasterii S. Severi libri X*, eds. J.-F. Pédegert and A. Lugat, 2 vols (Aire-sur-l'Adour, 1876), vol. 1, p. 151.

[5] Cf. C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever' in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever, Millénaire de l'Abbaye : Colloque international, 25, 26 et 27 mai 1985* (Mont-de-Marsan, 1986), pp. 27-38, at p. 27; R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 30.

build a new monastery dedicated to Saint Sever.[1] This land purchase is not to be doubted,[2] and since the time of Jean de Jaurgain all subsequent historians have agreed that the purchase, and the associated original charter, happened on 14 September 988.[3] The foundation or restoration of the monastery no doubt started in the months thereafter,[4] although some have suggested as late as 993;[5] but if we accept the date of 988 for the land purchase then this is the *terminus a quo* for the foundation of the monastery itself.[6]

More importantly for our purposes we can now come to a text where Northmen are actually mentioned: the so-called foundation or restoration charter of Saint-Sever. This text was

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[1] This text was edited and published by the Saint-Sever Benedictine P.-D. du Buisson in 1681 (seemingly having been copied in 1650): P.-D. du Buisson, *Historiae monasterii S. Severi*, vol. 1, pp. 149-51; it is also reproduced in C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 34, and also, with a French translation and critique, in G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans. *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever (Landes) (988-1359)*, 2 vols (Dax, 2010), vol. 1, pp. 104-9. The same text with a couple of very minor graphical differences is found in the departmental archives of the Landes: A. D. Landes, H. 14, fol. 77, and reproduced by P. Aimès, *Conjectures sur l'origine de la ville de Saint-Sever*, p. 13, for the text and see also pp. 3-4. It is usually contended that this charter in the late sixteenth-century Saint-Sever cartulary called the 'Red Book' by du Buisson is that now found in A. D. Landes, H. 14, although C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 27 and n. 2, cast doubt on this.

[2] Cf. C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', pp. 27-28.

[3] J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol. 1, p. 188. The list of historians who agree with this dating is too long to reproduce here. C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette (*ibid*., p. 28) point out quite rightly that both Marca and du Buisson had difficulties with the date of this land purchase, which they both place in 982, because the charter says that it happened in 'regnante rege Hugone', and Hugh Capet was not to be crowned king of France until 987. But Higounet and Marquette (*ibid*.) say that the dating to 14 September 988 was 'sous le règne du premier Capétian', which seems to resolve the problem.

[4] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 29.

[5] For the date of 993 see P. Aimès, *Conjectures sur l'origine de la ville de Saint-Sever*, pp. 4-9; an idea earlier expounded by J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol. 1, p. 189. But this date is based on some suppositions and hazardous calculations starting with the erroneous date of 963 for the advent of Abbot Salvator at Saint-Sever and the length of his abbacy; for which see R.-A. Sénac, 'Essai de prosopographie d'abbés de monastères gascons (945-1059)', p. 609 and n. 64. J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol 1, p. 186, says: 'Le duc de Gascogne [William Sanche] nous apprend dans la charte de Saint-Sever - 993 - que les Normands envahirent ses terres, qu'il réussit à les vaincre et qu'il promit alors à Dieu de bâtir un monastère [referencing P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, pp. 215-23]. Les chroniques latines et les auteurs arabes parlent avec détails d'une grande incursion que les Normands firent, en 968, dans toute la Galice, où ils brûlèrent et saccagèrent dix-huit villes [which is clearly taken from Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story in *De moribus* of eighteen Spanish cities being captured]. Ils étaient environ huit mille [Jaurgain gets this number, which has been repeated ever since, from Dozy's highly dubious calculation at pp. 308, 303 and n. 1 of his 'Les Normands en Espagne' using 80 Northmen per ship (a guess he took from Thietmar of Merseburg's *Chronicle* regarding King Knut's fleet in 1016) multiplied by the 100 ships of 968 mentioned in the *Historia Silense*] et leurs déprédations ne durèrent pas moins de trois ans; mais, enfin, ils furent complètement défaits et obligés de reprendre la mer, en 971. Cependant, vers le mois de juillet de la même année, ils menaçaient encore les côtes occidentales de l'Andalousie. Leur expédition en Gascogne dut avoir lieu quelques années plus tard, vers 985, et l'on comprend que, dans une circonstance aussi grave, Sanche Abarca [meaning Sancho Garcés II the king of Pamplona and Count of Aragon from 970 until his death in 994. He was the eldest son of García Sánchez I of Pamplona and Andregoto Galínde, for whom see A. Cañada Juste, '¿Quién fue Sancho Abarca?', *Príncipe de Viana*, 255 (2012), pp. 79-131] se soit porté au secours de son beau-frère [William Sanche], d'autant mieux que, d'après Rodolphe Glaber, le roi de Pampelune fut aidé par Guillaume-Sanche dans ses guerres.' Although the last part of this interpretation should be doubted, this is a most interesting early linking of the raids in Iberia in the late 960s and early 970s with the Northmen's purported arrival in Gascony, although much of his dating seems rather arbitrary and unsubstantiated. Where Jaurgain got the idea of 'vers 985' for the arrival of these Northmen from Iberia in Gascony is not at all clear. His dating of the foundation of the monastery at Saint-Sever to 993 was touched on above.

[6] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 32.

reproduced by du Buisson from some *membrana veteri*,[1] which perhaps was copied from a text written (or copied?) under the abbot Raimond d'Arboucave, that is between 1107 and 1125-1128,[2] although perhaps the original short 'foundation charter' was, as P. Aimès suggests, subject to the confection of *fausses* copies under the abbacy of Suavius (1092-1107) in relation to the affair of Soulac.[3] The earliest example of this so-called foundation charter is actually that found added into the remaining 'white pages' of the famous Saint-Sever illustrated version of Beatus of Liébana's *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (*Commentaria In Apocalypsin*) produced at the monastery at Saint-Sever in the eleventh century under the auspices of the abbot of Saint-Sever Gregory of Montaner (1028-1072).[4] This particular addition to the *Beatus* (along with others)[5] was made at the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth century[6] and could well be the original text which was eventually transmitted to the 'copy' used by both du Buisson and Marca.[7]

We should now look at what this 'pseudo-charter' says. It is of such importance for our concerns that I will quote the relevant part of Pon's and Cabanot's French translation in full, noting that all the references in the first-person singular refer to William Sanche himself. After a few brief words, in a normal diplomatic style, saying that 'Moi, comte Guilhem-Sanche' (*ego Guilelmus Sancius comes*) in order to honour God have decided to gratify the monasteries of the saints by giving them lands, the text then jumps to a more legendary style which is clearly a later interpolation:[8]

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[1] P.-D. du Buisson, *Historiae monasterii S. Severi*, vol. 1, p. 160. Whether this was found in the 1580 Saint-Sever cartulary (the 'Red Book') or not is a still open question, although it is usually assumed that it was.

[2] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', pp. 27, 31; P.-D. du Buisson, *Historiae monasterii S. Severi*, vol. 1, p. 160, and pp. 151-59 for the text itself. J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol. 1, p. 396, transcribed du Buisson's text. The text is also found in A.D. Landes, H. 14, fol. 65 and ff.

[3] P. Aimès, *Conjectures sur l'origine de la ville de Saint-Sever*, pp. 10-11. C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 31, says Aimès's argumentation is 'assez convaincante'. For the 'affair' of Soulac see in the first instance E. Nortier, 'L'affaire de l'église de Soulac d'après les actes faux contenus dans le *Beatus* (XIe siècle)', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 99-109.

[4] For the complete text see 'Documents transcrits à la fin de Beatus', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 114-16, and G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans, *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever*, vol. 1, pp. 108-25. For the composition of the Saint-Sever *Beatus* under Abbot Gregory see in the first instance J. Williams, 'Le *Beatus* de Saint-Sever, Etat des questions', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 251-64, esp. 251-52; J. Vezin, 'Observations paléographiques sur l'Apocalypse de Saint-Sever', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 265-278, esp. p. 265; C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'Conclusions', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 344-45.

[5] For all these later additions to the Saint-Sever *Beatus* see E. Nortier, 'L'affaire de l'église de Soulac' and 'Documents transcrits à la fin du *Beatus*', both in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, at pp. 99-109 and pp. 113-28, and E. Nortier, 'El "Beato" de Saint-Sever, in *Estudois y comentarios*, vol. 2 (Madrid, 1984), pp. 75-80.

[6] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 27.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans. *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever*, vol. 1, p. 109, p. 112, n. 19.

> Voici en quelle occasion c'est formé ce projet [*Occasio autem hujus meę intentionis hęc est*] : une troupe infâme de Normands, ayant quitté son propre sol, a franchi nos frontières, désirant dépeupler et piller les terres que Dieu a daigné me confier par droit héréditaire ; pour que Dieu lui-même m'arrache des mains de ces abominables scélérats qui se dressaient contre moi pour me faire la guerre, je me suis agenouillé devant le tombeau du très saint martyr Sever, afin qu'il me protège par son intercession. Et de même que jadis Adrien, le roi de ce pays, après le rétablissement de sa santé corporelle, a mis le royaume et s'est lui-même mis tout entier sous la dépendance du susdit martyr, de même moi, j'ai promis de livrer à saint Sever tout le pays soumis à mon pouvoir, si je remportais la victoire, de servir en toute chose Dieu et saint Sever, et de construire, à la place d'une pauvre petite église, un magnifique et illustre monastère. Après avoir fait ce vœu, j'ai attaqué la très abominable troupe : et ce très glorieux martyr que j'avais appelé au secours fit son apparition sur un cheval blanc et orné d'armes éclatantes, et il terrassa et envoya de nombreux milliers de ces infâmes dans les geôles du Tartare. À la fin, après avoir remporté la victoire, je me suis efforcé d'accomplir entièrement mon vœu […].[1]

At least to my mind modern scholarship has convincingly established that this text is apocryphal, or as Higounet and Marquette put it: 'Il nous apparait que la soi-disant charte de restauration de l'abbaye par le comte Guillaume-Sanche est un document diplomatiquement apocryphe, pour la confection duquel le faussaire a pu se server de quelques éléments empruntés à la charte originale de fondation, perdue ou détruite,'[2] and that 'La pseudo-charte de Guillaume-Sanche' belongs to an 'entreprise de falsification' which is of little value.[3] They also say regarding this part of the story that: 'Tout le passage interpolé dans les premières décennies du XIIe siècle […] ne peut pas être retenu.'[4]

According to Higounet and Marquette it seems that we may accept that the first part of this text starting with *ego Willelmus Sancias comes* ('I William Sanche count') and the start of the *exposé* may have come from an original charter but once we get to the long passage starting with *Occasio autem huius meę intencionis hęc est* all thereafter is spoiled (*se gâte*) and one

[1] G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans. *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever*, vol. 1, pp. 112-13. Another translation is found in R. Mussot-Goulard, 'La Gascogne', in M. Zimmermann (ed.), *Les sociétés méridionales autour de l'an Mil. Répertoire des sources et documents commentés* (Paris, 1992), pp. 319-22; and see also R. Mussot-Goulard's *résumé* in 'La Bataille de Taller', pp. 552-53.
[2] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 29.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 31.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 32.

'entre dans un récit à caractère miraculeux'.[1] Certainly this is true of the story of the intervention of Saint Sever on his white horse which is probably a mimicking of, or even a borrowing from, the many stories of Saint James 'Matamoros'.[2] But what of the Northmen William Sanche had supposedly defeated?

If the whole story we are concerned with was concocted in the late years of the eleventh century or even the early decades of the twelfth century and was added into the remaining blank pages of the Saint-Sever version of Beatus of Liébana's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, as Higounet and Marquette suggest, and which I deem likely, then it might be wise to doubt any of its content.

In his 'conclusions' to the papers presented at the 1985 *Colloque* on the abbey of Saint-Sever and in the subsequent discussions Charles Higounet summarises his opinion thus: 'On peut tenir, en premier lieu, pour assuré que les deux dossiers documentaires relatifs aux origines de l'abbaye, celui transmis par dom Du Buisson et celui des copies du *Beatus*, sont constitués de

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[1] C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 28. See also P. Aimès, *Conjectures sur l'origine de la ville de Saint-Sever*, pp. 6-8, 14-17. R. Mussot-Goulard believes that this whole *récit* regarding the foundation of Saint-Sever was written in 1017: cf. *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 15-16, 21, 22, 176-77 and notes. This is based on one recapitulation of diverse donations made by counts William Sanche and his successors Bernard and *Sancio* (Sanche-Guillaume) said in one addition to the Saint-Sever *Beatus* to have been made in this year at the fort of Palestrion (at Saint-Sever): 'Actum est hoc oppido Palestrion annis ab incarnato Domino mille decem et septem, regnante Rotberto, Sancio comite Wasconiae', written by a monk called *Godefredus* (cf. BNF, MS Latin 8878, fol. 288-289; No. 7, in 'Documents transcrits à la fin du *Beatus*', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 120-21. I will not explore these donations in detail, for which see B. Suau, 'La formation du temporel de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, pp. 77-98. Mussot-Goulard, however, says that it was at Saint-Sever (Palestrion) in 1017 that 'le comte Sanche' demanded of the monk *Godefredus* not only a list of the possessions conceded to the abbey by different counts, but that he also 'demanda une rédaction d'*Historia* à Saint-Sever', hence supposedly the 'foundation charter' of Saint-Sever. However nowhere is this said and it is merely Mussot-Goulard's speculation. In referring to Mussot-Goulard's views on this point, C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 31, say: 'Certes, les princes territoriaux ont toujours eu intérêt à faire savoir, au-delà des documents de la pratique diplomatique, leurs activités et leurs réalisations, en faisant intervenir la « geste » sinon le miraculeux. Le dossier de Saint-Sever n'a pas échappé, dans une certaine mesure, à cet aspect des choses. Mais, de là à imaginer qu « une recherche historique fut mise en mouvement » pour « faire connaître l'histoire du pays, de sa tradition du pouvoir » après la maladie de Sanche-Guillaume en 1017 et « sous l'impulsion » du comte lui-même dans la perspective d'une succession difficile, nous paraît, dans le cas des chartes de Saint-Sever, relever du roman. Voir, en particulier, dans le relevé des donations inséré dans le *Beatus* portant l'année 1017, le début d'une « rédaction d'histoire » est, pour le moins, discutable.'

[2] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, pp. 216-17, acknowledged this, but he also gave other earlier examples of the appearance of saints on white horses during real or imagined battles. C. Higounet and J.-B. Marquette, 'L'origines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Sever', p. 32, say that 'l'apparition du cheval blanc pendant la bataille appartient à l'imaginaire ; seule, transparaît, mais sans plus de valeur précise, la lointaine mémoire du temps troublé des Normands'. One is also reminded here of the late ninth-century story of Adelerius in his continuation of Adrevald's first book of the *Miracles of Saint Benedict* telling of a victory by Hugh the Abbot over the Northmen near to the monastery at Fleury, after which Hugh is reputed to have said: 'Pendant tout ce combat, saint Benoît m'a protégé, tenant de sa main gauche les rênes de mon cheval, il me dirigeait et me protégeait, tandis que de sa main droite il tenait un bâton avec lequel il mit à mort beaucoup d'ennemis en les assommant.' See Adelerius, *Miracles of Saint Benedict*, ed. de Certain, chap. 41, pp. 88-89; ed. and trans. Davril, pp. 192-95; A. Davril, 'Un monastère et son patron. Saint Benoît, patron et protecteur de l'abbaye de Fleury', available online http://journals.openedition.org/crm/382, at pp. 7-8.

chartes pour la plupart suspectes ou fausses. Cette falsification, œuvre d'une officine monastique (fin du XIe - début du XIIe siècle), a correspondu au désir de l'abbaye de se donner une histoire et de produire un dossier destiné à défendre ses droits sur Notre-Dame de Soulac. La date de la fondation de l'abbaye qui découle de cette critique peut désormais être fixée entre le 15-19 septembre 988 et juin 989. Le premier abbé, dont on ignore l'origine, a été Salvator. Quant à l'observance, on n'en a point trouvé d'autre que la règle de saint Benoît. Il convient de se débarrasser, en tout cas, des légendes issues des chartes falsifiées, en particulier celle de la bataille victorieuse contre les Normands qui aurait provoqué le vœu du comte de Gascogne Guillaume-Sanche, fondateur de l'abbaye - même si une charte du Beatus a conservé tardivement le souvenir des pirates scandinaves.'[1] Elsewhere he says: 'Nous pensons, avec M. Marquette, que l'on ne peut pas tabler sur la charte de fondation de Saint-Sever pour démontrer ou pour indiquer l'existence d'une bataille contre les Normands.'[2]

The 'History of the Abbots of Condom' and the supposed location and date of a legendary battle at 'Taller'

We must now turn to a story found in a fourteenth-century manuscript generally called the 'History of the Abbots of Condom' (*Historia Abbatiae Condomiensis*) seemingly concerning the same event as described in the 'foundation/restoration charter' of the monastery of Saint-Sever.[3]

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[1] C. Higounet, 'Conclusions', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever. Millénaire de l'abbaye*, p. 341.

[2] C. Higounet, 'Discussion', in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever. Millénaire de l'abbaye*, p. 35. See in this regard J.-B. Marquette, 'La renaissance médiévale (milieu du Xe siècle - fin du XIIe siècle)', in S. Lerat (ed.), *Landes et Chalosses*, vol. 1 (Pau, 1983), pp. 147-206. Geoges Pon and Jean Cabanot while stating that they do not wish to follow Mussot-Goulard do state that this interpolation is a description of the battle of Taller. They also say 'la présence des Normands sur les rivages de la Gascogne à la fin du Xe siècle n'est pas absolument impossible, puisque leur présence est signalée sur les côtes du Poitou par Adémar de Chabannes […]. On ne voit pas bien pourquoi les Normands ne descendraient au-delà de la Vendée' : cf. G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans. *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever*, vol. 1, p. 113, n. 24. This story of Ademar will be discussed in detail in the next and final chapter, but I would just say that this incursion in the Vendée/Poitou likely happened in 1012-1013, and really, therefore, should not be brought into the equation here regarding a story which if true happened several decades before.

[3] As was seen in Chapter 8, R. Mussot-Goulard calls this part of the *History of the Abbots of Condom* the *Gesta* of the princes of Gascony, as well as the *Historia Monasteria Condomiensis*. She confidently states in *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 18, that these *Gesta* were written in the monastery of Condom in the time of the abbot Hugh, meaning according to her before 1020 (cf. *eadem*, *Histoire de Condom*, p. 100) 'comme l'indiquent certains de ses passages', referencing 'ci-après, p. 172', where actually nothing at all is mentioned about this; but perhaps see p. 176. Cf. also *ibid*., p. 23, where she places the composition in 'about 1020', and p. 24, and also *eadem*, *Histoire de Condom*, p. 86. In her book *Histoire de Condom*, p. 89, she says: 'Les *Gesta* ou hauts faits des princes et des fondateurs de l'église de Condom font l'objet d'un deuxième récit que nous avons largement reproduit plus haut. Cette partie de l'ouvrage est contemporaine de l'abbé Hugues, voire son œuvre. L'auteur parle souvent à la première personne nommant son père Gombaud, son oncle Guillaume, ce qui renvoie bien à Hugues.' I do not quite understand this statement because in the Condom *récit* that she has *largement reproduit plus haut* (at pp. 81-82) nothing is said in the first person, all is written in the third person (see p. 82).' In my opinion all the indications in this text point to a later date of composition, perhaps not as late as the fourteenth century (the date of BNF, MS

This text says that *Guillelmus Sanctii* (William Sanche) had 'successait et totius promeruit culmen honoris'. In his days the perfidious *gens* of the Northmen (*gens perfida Normannorum*) had skirted/circulated along the maritime coasts of the borders/limits of Gascony, which they entered or invaded. They, the Northmen, or perhaps it was William Sanche himself,[1] then came into a certain 'vast plain called *Taleras*' ('in quadam vasta planitie Taleras dicta'), where William Sanche attacked them in this 'same desolate/destitute plain' and killed so many of them that 'to this day' one can see in this place many of the bones of the slain strewn across the wild sods of the vegetation. This victory was of such an extent that because of this countered misfortune (of the Northmen that is) none had since spread into (or troubled) Gascony: 'Hac ergo plaga correcti, non apposuerunt ultra pervadere fines Gasconiae.'[2] Using Mussot-Goulard's rather tendentious though still fine French translation, after 'Sanche fils de Sanche' had died without leaving any children his younger brother 'Guillaume-Sanche' succeeded him:[3]

> C'est pendant son gouvernement[4] que la nation perfide des Normands, christianisée en apparence mais non en réalité, envahit les rivages et les limites de la Gascogne, et s'installa dans une plaine appelé Taller. Guillaume les attaqua si vigoureusement en ce même endroit que, aujourd'hui encore, ce lieu désolé n'est plus jonché que des ossements des tués. Mais ensuite, ils n'osèrent plus s'attaquer à la Gascogne.[5]

Latin 5652) as Luc d'Achery would have it, but certainly later than the early eleventh century. In Luc d'Achery's opinion: 'Ejus vero historiae exordia sic falsis narrationibus fœdata erant et conspurcata, ut ea expungere necessarium duxerimus ne lector eruditus insulsis ejusmodi initiis offensus cœtera ejusdem historiae quae profutura esse existimavimus, respueret.'

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, 'La bataille de Taller', p. 554, argues that the words *dictus Guillelmus Sanctii* after *vasta planitie Taleras dicta consedit*, which are only found in the fourteenth-century Paris manuscript of this text ('B.N. Ms. Latin 5652'), and which are omitted in Luc d'Achery's edition, 'modifient considérablement le sens de la phrase puisque ce ne sont plus les Normands mais Guillaume Sanche qui sont installés à Taller [*sic*] avant le combat'. On the other hand, in her by then just recently published book *Les princes de Gascogne* (p. 136) she states that 'Taller [*sic*] semble bien être un point d'implantation durable des Normands', and that 'le développement de nombreuses mottes dans ces régions de l'Adour pourrait bien leur être imputable', which is a very dubious assumption. All of this is a little bit indecisive and certainly confusing.

[2] 'Cujus in diebus gens perfida Normannorum christicolis jam nomine magis quam opibus unita, maritima littora circumiens, Gasconiae (Guasconiae) fines invasit, et in quadam vasta planitie Taleras dicta consedit dictus Guillelmus Sanctius (Sanctii); quos ille aggressus tanta caede in eadem planitie solitudinis mactavit, ut magis hodie videatur operta in locis quam plurimis ossibus occisorum quam cespitibus herbarum agrestibus. Hac ego plaga correcti, non apposuerunt ultra pervadere fines Gasconiae'; see Luc d'Achery (ed.), *Spicilegium* (1677), vol. 13, p. 443; (1723), vol. 2, p. 581; R. Mussot-Goulard, 'La bataille de Taller', p. 554; J.-F. Bladé, 'L'Évêché des Gascons. Préliminaires', *Revue de l'Agenais*, 24 (1897), pp. 496-514 at p. 506.

[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Histoire de Condom*, p. 81.

[4] It is not completely sure from the text that the Northmen were supposed to have originally arrived on the coasts of Gascony in William's days, although perhaps this is the implication. But even if we date the arrival to his days according to Mussot-Goulard (*Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 129) he became count of Gascony in about 960, and as there is no date given for this fight in the vast plain of *Taleras* there is no reason in the text of Condom to place this battle, if it happened at all, in 982; see the comments on dating below.

[5] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Histoire de Condom*, p. 81.

But what does 'the vast plain of *Taleras*' mean or refer to, which was apparently a 'desolate plain' where William Sanche defeated the Northmen who had been troubling the maritime coasts of Gascony? Where may the *vasta planitie Taleras* have been located?

Robert-André Sénac says: 'Taller, dans les Landes, jouit d'une certaine réputation.'[1] This was written in 1983 and today may even seem something of an understatement. In fact nowadays it is almost invariably stated as a near certainty, including on all the descriptive touristic notices in the village of Taller (dep. Landes) and just outside the village at the so-called 'Fosse Gombaud/Guimbaud' on the brook called the Escourion where some local historians have placed the battle itself,[2] and have even created their own local myths such as to the effect

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[1] R.-A. Sénac, 'Essai de prosopographie d'abbés de monastères gascons (945-1059)', p. 610. The idea that this battle took place at Taller is not as old as we might imagine. Neither P. de Marca nor A. d'Oihénart suggest such a thing, nor do J. de Jaurgain or J.-F. Bladé, nor even does F. Lot. L-C. Brugèles, *Chroniques ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Auch*, p. 78, only states, without any reference being given and immediately after mentioning the *Normands* in the North in the opening decades of the tenth century, that: 'Ils se jetterent de nouveau sur l'Aquitaine, & particulierement sur la Gascogne, qu'ils ravagerent, mais dont le Duc Guillaume-Sanche les chassa tout-à-fait environ l'an 980.' The earliest suggestion I can find (and I may be wrong here) identifying *Taleras* with Taller near Castets was made by Joseph Légé, an *abbé* of Duhart in the Landes, in his 'Notice sur l'Abbé Lalanne (suite et fin)', *Petite revue catholique du diocèse d'Aire et de Dax: études historiques, archéologiques, scientifiques et chronique religieuse* (Dax and Bayonne, 1870), p. 245; followed (although with a question mark) by the *curé/doyen* of Mimizan Lucien Départ in his article titled 'Mimizan. Notice historique', *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, vol. 8 (Dax, 1883), pp. 45-56, 89-105, 213-30; vol. 9 (Dax, 1884), pp. 145-51, 185-200, at (1883) p. 229. In P. Haristoy's very unreliable (certainly in terms of the Northmen) *Recherches historiques sur le pays Basque*, vol.1 (Bayonne/Paris, 1883), p. 70, he says that in 980 William Sanche 'tailla en pieces [...] les hordes normandes à Talères ou Cazères près de Saint-Sever'. *Cazères* is Cazères-sur-l'Adour (dep. Landes, cant. Grenade-sur-l'Adour) between Saint-Sever and Aire-sur-l'Adour; his *Talères* seems to me not to mean an alternative 'Taller' (dep. Landes, cant. Castets) as R.-A. Sénac thinks, (see 'Essai de prosopographie d'abbés de monastères gascons', n. 78, p. 623), but is rather Haristoy identifying the plain of *Taleras* of the Condom text with *Cazères*. I suggest Haristoy took this idea from J. J. Monlezun, *Histoire de la Gascogne, depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'a nos jours*, vol. 1 (Auch, 1846), p. 378, where Monlezun (a canon of Auch) says that William Sanche met 'les Normands dans les plaines de Talères au pays de Tursan [...]', here referencing the Condom text. The *pays de Tursan* is actually the small forested land bordered by Cazères-sur-l'Adour. A. Dauzat, *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de famille et prénoms de France* (Paris, 1975) suggests Talais near to Soulac (dep. Gironde, cant. Saint-Vivien-de-Médoc).

[2] See for instance the article of the local school teacher Josette Larrègue, 'Une certitude : la Fosse Gombaud', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (1983), pp. 587-96, an article full of quite unsubstantiated conjectures. Gombaud, or *Gumbaldus* in Latin, was the brother of Count William Sanche. He was the bishop of Agen and Bazas as well as, supposedly, the first 'Bishop of Gascony'. For him see in the first instance R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 129-30; J.-P. Laulom, 'Gombaud, Evêque de Gascogne', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (1983), pp. 577-86. Although much more could be, and has been, said of this *Gumbaldus*, for our concerns here the relevance is that some local clerics/historians have him either dying fighting alongside his brother William Sanche at 'Taller' and then being buried at the site of the battle, or alternatively founding a hospice there which later supposedly bore his name. For some of these very spurious ideas see V.-M. Foix, *Anciens hôpitaux du diocèse de Dax d'après le testament d'Arnaud-Raymond, vicomte de Tartas* (Aire-sur-l'Adour, 1899); *idem*, 'Les Hôpitaux-Prieurés de Poymartet et de Fosse-Guibaud', *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 20 (Dax, 1895), pp. 197-212. The nineteenth-century abbot of Duhart in the Landes Joseph Légé in his 'Notice sur l'Abbé Lalanne', p. 245, says: 'Guillaume Sanche […] faisait bâtir le monastère de Saint-Sever, et Gombaud, frère de Guillaume, élevait l'hôpital de Fosse Guimbaut à Taller, dans ce lieu même où ils avaient écrasé les Normands venus par l'embouchure de l'Adour à Cap Breton.' I will leave to one side the question of where these Northmen may have arrived in the Landes although the 'mouth' of the Adour was certainly at this time at or near Capbreton, but this hospice on one of the pilgrimage roads to Santiago de Compostella was founded by Saint Louis (Louis IX, reign 8 November 1226 - 25 August 1270) possibly between 1240 and 1250, and the first mention of it is in 1274 when

that the Northmen had their base at nearby Castets, and that preferring to engage in open battle to suffering a siege by William Sanche's forces[1] coming from his rather legendary residence/fortress at *Palestrion* (now in the present town of Saint-Sever)[2] they had come out from Castets to meet the Gascons - and been defeated.[3] All of this is simply conjecture. The most important aspect to highlight is that the present village of Taller certainly got its name well after the tenth century,[4] and according to Bénédicte Boyrie-Fénié, who is an, or the, authority on the place-names of the Landes and Gascony,[5] the present village of Taller 'ne semble malheureusement pas avoir la moindre relation avec cet évènement',[6] that is the supposed 'historical' battle involving the Northmen and Count William Sanche. By examining in detail the name of *Taleras* Boyrie-Fénié concludes: 'Pour séduisante qu'elle soit, il nous faut […] écarter l'hypothèse d'un rapport entre le nom Taller et la bataille fameuse qui s'y déroula,'[7] and 'si elle [the toponymy of the Landes] ne nous permet d'entrer dans la bataille de Taller, peut-être nous donne-t-elle une idée du paysage dans lequel elle se déroula?'.[8] That is a landscape of people engaged in coppicing (*Taillis*) where tree stumps grew new suckers (*rejets*

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it is called the 'Hospitali de Hoce-Guibaut'; for which see C. Bémont, ed., *Recueil d'actes relatifs à l'administration des rois d'Angleterre en Guyenne au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1914), p. 55; C. Blanc, 'Les Caveries de Taller', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (1983), pp. 647-655, at p. 648, who also says (*ibid*., p. 649) that: 'Il est […] probable […] que si [notice the 'if'] l'Évêque Gombaud fut le fondateur de l'Hôpital, le roi Saint Louis dût en renouveler officiellement les privilèges, un peu moins de deux cents ans plus tard, tout en le faisant remettre en état, s'il avair [*sic*] subi les outrages du temps et des guerres, depuis la lointaine époque de sa fondation.' J. Larrègue (*ibid*., p. 590) asks regarding this foundation by Saint Louis 'que fait ici Saint-Louis ?'. She then answers her own question, 'Il [Saint Louis] laisse et donne à l'hôpital construit au sud de l'Escourion, sur la rive gauche, le nom de Fosse Gombaud. Pourquoi ? Sans doute pour perpétuer un souvenir, un événement qu'il considérait assez important pour ne pas vouloir le détruire et nous ne sommes là qu'à 250 années de la bataille et Saint-Louis est informé'. She continues in a very self-serving and circular manner: 'La Fosse Gombaud était l'endroit où Guillaume Sanche avait laissé ses morts', and then after suggesting that *Fosse* should perhaps not be taken to mean a *trou* or a *dépression* she says that: 'La petite chapelle symbolisait une sépulture […]. Qui est enterré la ? Gombaud ? évêque des gascons et frère du duc Guillaume Sanche ? Il peut être là, car on a souvent considéré, sans preuves, qu'il avait disparu dans la bataille, car après on ne parle plus guère de lui. On peut aussi penser que c'est Gombaud qui a fait édifier cet oratoire ; il n'est pas impossible que Gombaud lui-même, au moment de sa mort ait voulu être enterré sur les hauts lieux où la victoire avait forgé la grandeur de sa famille. Cet endroit est donc étroitement lié à Gombaud, frère du duc Guillaume-Sanche.' This is all very well but there is no shred of evidence that the thirteenth-century *Hoce-Guibaut* near Taller took its name from the tenth-century Gumbaldus/Gombaud or that Saint Louis had given it this name in remembrance of 'un événement qu'il considérait assez important'.

[1] This is according to the tourist notice displayed in the parish of Taller.

[2] As stated by P. de Marca and R. Mussot-Goulard among others.

[3] Or so it is also hypothesised but stated as a fact on the touristic notice in the present parish of Taller.

[4] B. Boyrie-Fénié, 'Le toponyme de *Taller*', *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (Dax, 1983), pp. 567-71, esp. p. 567.

[5] See B. Boyrie-Fénié, *Dictionnaire toponymique des communes des Landes et bas-Adour* (Pau, 2005), *eadem*, *Dictionnaire toponymique des communes de Gironde* (Pau, 2008), and with her husband Jean-Jacques Fénié, *Toponymie gasconne* (Bordeaux, 1992); *Toponymie occitane* (Bordeaux, 1997); *Dictionnaire des pays et provinces de France* (Bordeaux, 2000); *Toponymie nord-occitane* (Bordeaux, 2003); *Dictionnaire des Landes* (Bordeaux, 2009).

[6] B. Boyrie-Fénié, 'Le toponyme de *Taller*', p. 567.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 568.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 570.

de souche).[1] This makes a lot of sense when we remember that the Condom text says the battle took place in the 'vast plain of *Taleras*' and 'in the desolate plain already referred to', decidedly not mentioning any specific place.[2] Thus if this battle really happened, rather than being apocryphal, it could have been anywhere in a vast wooded but coppiced plain, possibly but not necessarily in the Landes, and not necessarily at or near the present village of Taller which, as was mentioned above, did not yet exist or at least not under this name.

Let us turn now to the supposed date of this battle. If we may place the original land purchase for the monastery of Saint-Sever in 988 and the start of its foundation or restoration shortly thereafter, then if it was preceded by a battle against the Northmen this must logically have happened before the first date.

But why is it nowadays almost invariably placed in 982?[3] In fact, although it is not usually stated, this date is all based on a belief in the historicity of another 'pseudo-charter' delineating the limits of the diocese of Labourd (later Bayonne) under its bishop Arsius. I will hereafter refer to this as the *Charter of Arsius/Labourd*.[4] Discussion of this charter forms part of a centuries-long debate on the establishment of a bishop and diocese at Bayonne. Was this early or late? There is an enormous scholarly literature on this still hotly debated subject, but what is of most importance for our purposes regarding the Northmen is that this so-called *Charter of Arsius/Labourd* is said to have been written in the time of 'duke' William Sanche ('Duce Gasconiae Vuillelme Sancio'), of a pope Benedict and in the reign of Hugh 'the Great' king of

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[1] *Ibid*., pp. 569-70.

[2] One might be inclined to wonder if the bones supposedly still seen long after the battle are not a rather garbled reference to a landscape scattered with uprooted tree stumps and new suckers growing from them, but this is just a thought.

[3] C. Higounet, *Histoire de Aquitaine* (Toulouse, 1971), p. 150, initially wrote: 'La légende de Saint Sever fait vaincre des Normands à Taller (Landes), en 982, par le fils du duc de Gascogne Guillaume-Sanche,' although he does not opine on whether this 'legend' holds any truth. In any case by 1985 at the very latest Higounet seems to have come to the conclusion that this battle never happened at all.

[4] This pseudo-charter which dates from the second half of the eleventh century is found in the archives of the department of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques, G. 1. For which see V. Dubarat, 'Charte d'Arsius, évêque de Bayonne (vers 980), étude historique et critique', *Bulletin de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Pau*, 18 (Pau, 1888-89), pp. 37-66; *idem*, *Le Missel de Bayonne de 1543* (Pau, 1901), pp. XXX-XXXI; R.-A. Sénac, 'L'évêché de Gascogne et ses évêques (977-1059)', in *Actes du 104e congrès national des sociétés savantes*, 2 vols (Paris, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 131-44, at p. 134; *idem*, 'Essai de géographie et d'histoire de l'évêché de Gascogne (977-1059)', *Bulletin philologique et historique (jusqu'à 1610) du comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques: l'année 1980* (Paris, 1982), pp. 11-25; J.-F. Bladé, 'Charte dite d'Arsius', in V. Dubarat and J.-B. Daranatz (eds.), *Etudes historiques et religieuses du diocèse de Bayonne* (Bayonne/Pau, 1910), vol. 1, p. 401 (for the text) and pp. 38-9 for a photographic reproduction; J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie*, vol. 1, pp. 209-19; Camille Jullian, 'Lettre de Camille Jullian sur l'antiquité du siège épiscopal de Bayonne', *Bulletin de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne*, 26 (1938), pp. 73-81; J.-B. Daranatz, 'L'évêché de Bayonne, ses origines, ses frontières successives, le diocèse de Bayonne actuel', *Bulletin de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne*, 13 (1934), pp. 5-18; F. Lot, 'L'évêché de Bayonne', in *Mélanges d'histoire du moyen âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen* (Paris, 1951), pp. 433-43; R. Mussot-Goulard, *Le princes de Gascogne*, pp. 30-32. For a summary discussion regarding the authenticity of this charter see R.-A. Sénac, 'Essai de prosopographie d'abbés de monastères gascons', pp. 622-23, n. 73.

the Franks ('Hugone magno rege Francorum'), no doubt Hugh Capet; but it was also signed among others by Salvator abbot of Saint-Sever ('Salvatoris Abbis S. Seueri').[1] It should be noted here that Salvator is named in the charter or pseudo-charter of Saint-Sever regarding the foundation/restoration of the monastery and his being installed as the first abbot there;[2] but in spite of various discordant and contradictory elements in the *Charter of Arsius/Labourd* in 1640 Pierre de Marca, using some elaborate reasoning, dated it to *environ 982*,[3] and hence, because of the mention of Abbot Salvator, he placed the foundation by Count William Sanche of the monastery of Saint-Sever in the very same year. Marca does not explicitly conclude that the battle against the Northmen mentioned in the Saint-Sever text (in which he believes) happened in 982, but it is, I think, implicit, and it is from his reasoning and dating that the idea of a battle in 982, at Taller or not, ultimately derives.[4]

But, and in conclusion, this date of 982 ultimately finds no real foundation at all in the historical record.[5]

The 'Northman' Airald in the Condom text

After the mention of a battle in the 'vast plain of *Taleras*', the Condom text then gives a very literature-like and imaginative story about one of these Northmen who had invaded Gascony:

> Inter quos fuit quidam Normannorum fortissimus Airaldus[6] nuncupatus qui lorica indutus et armis praecinctus undique percutiebat et ipse percutiebatur sed absque laesione persistebat. Tandem captus et lorica exutus, dominicae crucis vexillum gestare est inventus ad collem dependens. Eo praesidio muniebatur indignus quo privatus repente est

[1] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 33.
[2] 'Documents transcrits à la fin de Beatus', in *Saint-Sever millénaire de l'abbaye*, p. 115; G. Pon and J. Cabanot, eds. and trans. *Chartes et documents hagiographiques de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever*, vol. 1, p. 119.
[3] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 33. Elsewhere (*ibid*., p. 31), and a little contradictorily, he places it in 980. For Marca's arguments and reasoning regarding this case see pp. 224-27, followed in great part by R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 31.
[4] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 30-32, would date the *Charter of Arsius/Labourd* to 981, and she says (*ibid*., p. 136, n. 72): 'La date de cette bataille de Taller a été fixée par Ch. Higounet [...] à 982. Cette date est possible. On pourtant la remonter à 981 si la victoire landaise a été contemporaine de l'enquête sur Labourd : A.D. Pyrénées Atlantiques G. 1,' meaning what I call the *Charter of Arsius/Labourd*, although elsewhere (*ibid*., p. 134) she dates this charter to 'vers 980'. In her 'La bataille de Taller', p. 555, the date of the 'battle of Taller' is given as '981-982', while in her later *Histoire de Condom*, p. 80, the battle is dated to 982, a date she also repeatedly gives in *Les princes de Gascogne* although on one occasion to 981-982 (p. 135).
[5] It is noticeable that R. Mussot-Goulard, in *Les princes de Gascogne*, pp. 136-37, very much agrees with and confirms the dating of the land purchase for the monastery at the future Saint-Sever to September 988 (and indeed places the foundation of the monastery in the same year), where Salvator is named as being installed as the first abbot, but she thinks that the *Charter of Arsius/Labourd* where *Salvatoris Abbis S. Seueri* is given as a signatory was made in 981. How does she want to square this circle? I do not know, but we might remark that she conspicuously does not mention Abbot Salvator at all.
[6] In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century copies the name is spelt *Ayraldus*.

necatus. Hoc vero lignum salutiferum honorandus comes huic cenobio devotissime est largitus, cujus probatissima virtus ignis injuriam repellit, imminentes grandinum tempestates effugans, vinoque aspersus quod languentibus propinetur salutem accompdat. Vocatur autum adhuc eodem nomine quo et miles qui eum gestatabat. Factus ergo Guillelmus princeps patrias […].[1]

Parmi eux se trouvait un très redoutable normand appelé Airald qui protégé par sa cuirasse et ses armes paraissait invulnérable : les traits le touchaient mais ne le blessaient pas. Enfin il fut fait prisonnier et, sous sa cuirasse, on vit pendre à son cou la croix de Seigneur, alors qu'il était indigne. Sitôt qu'elle lui fut retirée, il mourut. Le comte offrit alors ce bois porteur de vie à notre monastère. Depuis, il apporte le salut, car on a reconnu sa vertu contre l'incendie, la tempête, et, aspergé de vin, dans le rétablissement des malades. On nomme toujours cette croix du nom du guerrier qui la portait. Guillaume devint ainsi prince de la province.[2]

So, we are led to believe there was at some later date a cross at Condom which was said to have belonged to a certain *Airald*, a cross which had in later times protected the monastery from many ills. The author has weaved this into a legendary and hagiographical story concerning a defeat of the Northmen. *Airald* was extremely strong and he wore a coat of mail, yet although some of the projectiles aimed at him had managed to pierce his coat of mail, they had left him unharmed. According to the story, and in a rather typical hagiographical manner, it was this cross that *Airald* was falsely wearing (because he was not really christian) which had protected him, and it was only when he was captured and his coat of mail removed that the cross was found hanging round his neck. When this protection was taken from *Airald* he promptly died. The content of this whole story points in the direction of a late date of composition for this part of the *History of the Abbots of Condom*.[3] Perhaps the author wanted to create from the presence/existence of a cross at Condom in later times an appropriate heroic story for Count William Sanche? If so, that is what he certainly did.

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[1] See L. d'Achery, ed., *Spicilegium* (1723), vol. 2, p. 582; R. Mussot-Goulard, 'La bataille de Taller', p. 554; J.-F. Bladé, 'L'Évêché des Gascons. Préliminaires', *Revue de l'Agenais*, 24 (1897), pp. 496-514 at p. 506

[2] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Histoire de Condom*, pp. 81-82.

[3] J.-F. Bladé was of the opinion that the whole of this 'cartulary' (called here the *History of the Abbots of Condom*) was written in one context sometime after 1371 and the whole first part (including the *Gesta* of Mussot-Goulard, part of which we are concerned with here) was 'évidemment fabuleuse' and was written as an introduction: see his *Origines du duché de Gascogne* (Agen, 1897); *L'Évêché des Gascons* (Paris, 1899), p. 14; and 'L'Évêché des Gascons. Préliminaires', p. 505. In this he is followed by F. Lot, *Études sur le règne de Hugues Capet*, p. 287.

The name *Airald* is interesting. It is usually suggested that it is a Latinised rendition of the Scandinavian name Harald or Harold. This is possible. Regarding the independent chieftain historians generally called 'Harald of Bayeux' operating in northern Neustria from (at least) 945[1] until 954,[2] he is called *Hagroldus* (variant *Haigroldus*) by Flodoard of Reims, *Hagroldus* by Richer of Reims, *Haigroldus* (variant *Aigroldus*, or *Haygrolde* in one of his verses) by Dudo of Saint-Quentin, followed once in this by William of Jumièges who elsewhere confuses him with a later Danish king *Heroldus* [Bluetooth].[3] It is not impossible that the Condom scribe took such a name from one of these sources as a good name for a Northman; but alternatively perhaps the cross at Condom which was believed in the oral tradition of the monastery to have belonged to an *Airald* may originally be referring to a Gascon called perhaps Airard /Ayrard such as the first archbishop of Auch of this name in the late ninth century; but this is just a thought.[4] Yet in

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[1] It is possible he had arrived before this, even as early at 942.

[2] *Annales Nivernenses*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH*, *Scriptores*, 13 (Hanover, 1881), pp. 88-91, at p. 89. M. Hagger, 'How the West was won', p. 21, says: 'Flodoard of Reims talks of newly arrived pagan Northmen fighting with the Bretons at Dol in 944, and of a chieftain called Harald, who was settled at Bayeux in 945 and *who was still there in 954*' (my emphasis), 'as noted in D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London, 1982), 14'. Actually, according to David Bates here: 'Hugh's campaign in 954 against a certain Harold looks very much like an attack on that same Harold who had held Bayeux in 944-45, and therefore like deliberate aid in re-establishing Richard's power in Lower Normandy', which is a completely unsubstantiated assumption that Richard I had any power in 'Lower Normandy' before 954, and certainly not in the Cotentin. M. Hagger (*ibid.*) also references here P. Bauduin, 'Du bon usage de la *do*s dans la Normandie ducale', p. 440'. But the *Annales Nivernenses* do not really say, to use Hagger's words, that Harald's Northmen 'were still there', that is I suppose in Bayeux in 954. What they actually say is: '954 [...] Hoc anno fuit Ugo dux Frantiae cum magno exercitu in Constantino pago super Araldum Normannum [...]', and that in the same year Louis (IV d'Outremer) died, which he did. 'In Constantino pago' means either the county of Coutances or more generally the Cotentin peninsula. This has rarely been commented upon. If Hugh had managed to oust Harald from Bayeux in 945 (according to Flodoard of Reims) then he probably went to/returned to the Cotentin afterwards.

[3] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. van Houts, III. 9, pp. 88-90. E. van Houts (*ibid*., n. 3, pp. 89-90) says: 'William of Jumièges is independent of Dudo here. Both, however, confuse the temporary viking leader Harald at Bayeux in the 940s with King Harald Bluetooth of Denmark (941-88) [...]. King Harald Bluetooth never came to Normandy. According to the *Encomium Emma* and Adam of Bremen, he was expelled by his son Svein Forkbeard and went to the Slavs [...]' where 'he died in exile': see *ibid*, n. 1, p. 116.

[4] J. Supéry, *La Saga des Vikings*, pp. 164-80, wanting to get any and all supposed 'evidence' no matter how unreliable to fit with his preconception of a long-lasting Scandinavian 'principality' in Gascony, would make the chieftain *Hagroldus* who was in charge at Bayeux according to Flodoard and Richer into a 'Harald de Bayonne', supposedly a descendant of 'Björn' (meaning William of Jumièges's *Bier Coste Ferree*). He suggests, to cut a rather long tale short, that his fleet had come *from Gascony* to save 'la Normandie', explicitly in 945 (p. 162), and after having done so he 'regagna la mer avec sa flotte' (p. 164), I guess for Bayonne, although Supéry seems unaware that 'Harald' was still in northern Neustria in 954. But then Supéry has 'Harald of Bayonne' returning to Normandy in about 960 and after five years of campaigning saving Richard I's 'Normandy' for a 'second time', at the end of which, in 965, not wanting to accept lands in Normandy offered to him by Richard I he returned 'on peut penser' to 'sa capitale bayonnaise' (p. 169). The raids into Galicia from 968 were, says Supéry, not led by 'Harald of Bayonne', but were led by 'Gundred' (for whom see elsewhere in this chapter); but they were 'clairement le jeu du roi de Bayonne' (*ibid.*), that is 'Harald of Bayonne', who had (*ibid.*) 'logiquement descendu à terre entre la Normandie et la côte espagnole', hence in Gascony. The Northmen who made an incursion into 'Andalousie' from 971 (to 972) were, according to Supéry, presumably 'originaires de Gascogne' (pp. 169-70), although whether these were led by his imagined 'Harald of Bayonne' is not stated. Whatever the case, 'Harald' himself was eventually killed at the 'battle of Taller' in 982 (p. 176). This is all an imaginative ripping yarn for an historical novel based only on a similarity of names, but it is completely forced and fabulous in terms of making 'Harald of Bayeux' into a 'Harald of Bayonne' related to Björn (who is the centre-piece of Supéry's ninth-century

my opinion what we should not and cannot do is suggest that 'Harald of Bayeux' is the same person as the rather mystical *Airald* of the late Condom text.[1] As already noted in an earlier chapter, I hope to explore the so-called 'Harald of Bayeux' more in the future. Who was he and what did he really do? And where had he gone to after we last find mention of him in the Cotentin in 954?[2]

Parallels with other Williams in Spain and France

On top of the similarity of the report by the ninth-century chronicler of Fontenelle that in 848 William the *dux* of Bordeaux had been captured by the Northmen after the city had fallen to them, there are two or three other parallels between the Gascon *History of the Abbots of Condom* and the 'foundation charter' of Saint-Sever and other stories told of 'Williams' in the eleventh-century Spanish *Chronicle of Sampiro* and in the *Chronicle* of Ademar of Chabannes.

Firstly, the early eleventh-century Spanish *Chronicle of Sampiro*[3] as it survives in three twelfth-century compilations: the *Historia Silense*, the *Liber chronicorum* of Pelayo of Oviedo

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Scandinavian 'principality' in Gascony) and in his blindly accepting so many dubious narratives, particularly those of Dudo of Saint-Quentin and his followers William of Jumièges and even 'Robert' Wace, but of course also the story found in the *History of the Abbots of Condom* and the pseudo-charter of Saint-Sever. On the other hand, much like R. Dozy and J. de Jaurgain more than a hundred years before him, it is to Supéry's credit that he does suggest and explore a possible link between the Northmen raiding into the Iberian Peninsula between 966 and 972 and those who had supposedly (according to Dudo) left the Seine in 965 or 966, and (implicitly, p. 170) had 'returned' to Gascony after 972.

[1] If this *Airald* who died at 'Taller' in the Landes, supposedly in 982, and who is not ever said to have been a chieftain at all, had been the same person as the chieftain 'Harald of Bayeux' then his active career must have stretched from at least 945 (or a little before), a period of about four decades. Not only does this completely beggar belief regarding how long Scandinavian chieftains were militarily active but we would also need to think about what 'Harald' had been doing since he seems to have been expelled from the Cotentin in 954. In essence we would probably have to link him with the Northmen who had attacked Brittany and Nantes in the late 950s and even with some of the Northmen who Dudo of Saint-Quentin says left the Seine in 965 or 966 and went to Spain. I find this literally incredible.

[2] B. T. Hudson, *Viking Pirates and Christian Princes*, pp. 66-68, 70, 71, 77, suggests that it was Harald of Bayeux's sons who later appeared in the Irish Sea zone, saying (p. 70): 'Harald of Bayeux led his armies to the Irish Sea region after 954', and that, 'he was succeeded by his sons Magnus and Harald'. This is a view that is much contested, see for example C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 186-90, who concludes (p. 190) that 'the sons of Haraldr may be linked to the king of Limerick who died in 940'.

[3] For the *Chronicle of Sampiro* see J. Pérez de Urbel, *Sampiro: su crónica y la monarquía leonesa en el siglo X*; J. M. Ruiz Asencio, 'La inclusión del *Chronicon* de Sampiro en la *Historia Silense*', *Archivos Leoneses: revista de estudios y documentación de los Reinos Hispano-Occidentales*, 54 (1973), pp. 279-86; A. Monsalve Figueiredo, 'Sampiro: un cronista y una época de la monarquía astur-leonesa', *Historia Abierta*, 41 (2008), pp. 28-30; E. Fernandez Vallina, 'Sampiro y el llamado Silense', *Helmantica: Revista de filología clásica y hebrea*, 29. 88 (1978), pp. 51-60.

and the *Chronica Naierense*,[1] says, according to the *Historia Silense*, which is the least interpolated version of the original *Chronicle of Sampiro* according to Christys:[2]

> In the second year of his reign (Ramiro III, i.e. 968) one hundred ships of Vikings (*Normani*) with their king Gundered penetrated the cities of Galicia and with much slaughter in the lands of Santiago, whose bishop Sisnando perished by the sword.[3] They sacked all Galicia as far as the *Pirineos montes Ezebrarii*.[4] In the third year of their settlement,[5] God, from whom nothing is hidden, brought down his vengeance upon them; for just as they had carried the Christians away captive and put many to the sword, so many ills fell upon them, until they were forced to go out from Galicia. Count Guillelmus Sánchez [*Comes namque Guillelmus Sancionis*], in the name of the Lord, and with the aid of the Apostle Santiago whose lands they had devastated, went out with a great army and with divine aid killed all the pagans, including their king, and burned their ships.[6]

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[1] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 83. For an introduction to the *Historia Silense* see *Historia Silense: edición crítica e introducción*, eds. J. Pérez de Urbel and A. González Ruiz-Zorrilla (Madrid, 1959), pp. 68-77; S. Barton and R. Fletcher, *The World of El Cid. Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 9-23; J. A. Estévez Sola, 'Editar la *Historia Silensis* hoy', available online: *e-Spania*: http://journals.openedition.org/e-spania/21651; J. M. Canal Sánchez-Pagín, 'Crónica silense o Crónica domnis sanctis?', *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, 63-64 (1980), pp. 94-103.

[2] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 83.

[3] The death of Bishop Sisnando in 968 is invariably placed at *Fornelos*.

[4] The *Pirineos montes Ezebrarii* were not the present 'Pyrenees' but mountains in Galicia and Léon. See *inter alia*: A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 84; H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*, pp. 143-44; I. García Losquiño, 'Los vikingos en la Península Ibérica: Nuevas perspectivas sobre piratas y mercenarios en la segunda mitad del siglo X', in M. J. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim* (Porto, 2018), pp. 39-52, at pp. 42-45.

[5] The Latin text says: 'Tertio vero anno, remeantibus illis ad propia', cited and translated by Irene García Losquiño as: 'As Tras tres años, cuando se volvían a su patria': see I. García Losquiño, 'Los vikingos en la Península Ibérica', p. 42 and n. 19. This *Tertio vero anno* is usually been taken to mean in the third year of Ramiro III, and hence means 969 for Gundered's defeat and death. If, however, it means 'in the third year of their [the Northmen's] settlement' then it more implies a date of *c*.970; a date also recently suggested by Irene García Losquiño (*ibid*., pp. 44-45); see also H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*, pp. 138-39, for a discussion. These are very tricky chronological and even geographical points, but whether Gundered was killed in 969 or 970 was his defeat the same as the immediately following information that 'Count Guillelmus Sánchez [*Comes namque Guillelmus Sancionis*], in the name of the Lord, and with the aid of the Apostle Santiago whose lands they had devastated, went out with a great army and with divine aid killed all the pagans, including their king (*cum rege*), and burned their ships'. The fact that the *Chronicle of Sampiro* as found in the *Historia Silense* says that the Northmen's king was killed here as well (*simul cum rege*) would seem to point in this direction because Gundered had previously been named as the Northmen's king (*cum rege nomine Gunderedo*). On the other hand, there remains the slight (?) possibility that count *Guillelmus Sancionis's* victory could have taken place after 969/970 when the Northmen had a 'new' king after Gundered's death. I will leave these ideas here; Iberian historians have very divergent views on this subject.

[6] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 83-84; *Historia Silense*, eds. J. Pérez de Urbel and A. G. Ruiz-Zorrilla, p. 171; J. Pérez de Urbel, *Sampiro: su crónica y la monarquía leonesa en el siglo X*, pp. 340-42.

Regarding Gundered, Ann Christys says: 'Gundered could be one of the two sons of Harald Finehair with this name (*Heimskringla*: 21 and 25), although neither is known to have gone to Spain.'[1] But what little we know of the legendary Harald Finehair in Norway and his dates would exclude that one of his sons was really in Spain in 968. But if so where does the now lost *Chronicle of Sampiro* as copied[2] into the twelfth-century *Historia Silense* get the name Gundered? I do not know. It is completely out of the question that the notary and courtier Sampiro who wrote the so-called *Chronicle of Sampiro* in the early eleventh century, and who at the end of his long life (in 1034-36) may have briefly become bishop of Astorga,[3] took it from the early thirteenth-century *Heimskringla*, in which case Gundered may really be an oral memory of the chieftain's real name.

Gundered's incursion is usually dated to 968-969 and his death in the latter year.[4] Whether Gundered's fleet was the same as that which appeared off the coasts of Portugal and fought a naval battle in 966 is not completely clear;[5] but that Gundered (and those who arrived in 966) came from the future Normandy is generally proposed by most Iberian historians,[6] although there may be other possibilities that could be explored.[7]

But even more intriguingly for our purposes in this chapter, who was this Count *Guillelmus Sancionis* who had gone 'out with a great army and with divine aid killed all the pagans, including their king, and burned their ships'? A count who had achieved this feat 'with the aid

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[1] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 84. This is based on the equation of the Latinised name *Gundered* with the two sons of Harald Finehair called *Guðrøðr* in *Heimskringla* (*Guðrøðr ijómi* and *Guðrøðr skirja*). N. S. Price, 'The Vikings in Spain, North Africa and the Mediterranean', p. 467, followed by H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*, p. 139, make *Gundered* Old Norse *Gunnrauðr*; while E. Morales Romero, *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la península Ibérica en los siglos IX-XI*, 2nd edn (Madrid, 2006), p. 185, and *idem*, 'Os vikingos en Galicia', p. 123, has ON *Gunrød*, in which he follows A. K. Fabricius, *Forbindelserne mellem Norden og den Spanske Halvø i ældre Tider* (Copenhagen, 1882), p. 76 and n. 1, who himself follows the eighteenth-century Danish historian Peter Frederik Suhm. They both make *Gundered*/*Gunrød* a brother (=Guðrøðr) of the Norwegian king Harald Greycloak (*Haraldr gráfeldr*, *c*. 935 - *c*. 975), but although this may make a little more chronological sense it is still just wishful thinking and I will not pursue the idea further here. J. S. Izquierdo Díaz, *Os Vikingos en Galicia* (Santiago de Compostella, 2009), p. 87, makes him a son of a Danish king Harald, followed by F. Alonso Romero, 'La navegación e itinerario del ejército normando de Gunderedo (968-969)', p. 63.

[2] Or maybe even interpolated?

[3] S. Barton and R. Fletcher, *The World of El Cid*, p. 11; R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain. Unity in Diversity, 400-1000* (New York, 1983), p. 241.

[4] See for instance F. Alonso Romero, 'La navegación e itinerario del ejército normando de Gunderedo'.

[5] I tend to believe they were.

[6] Just for example F. Alonso Romero, 'La navegación e itinerario del ejército normando de Gunderedo', pp. 62-64; V. Almazán, 'Los Vikingos en Galicia', p. 46; H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*, pp. 139-40. J. C. Sánchez Pardo, 'Los ataques vikingos y su influencia en la Galicia de los siglos IX-XI', p. 68.

[7] *Gundered* looks very much like an Iberian/Latinised rendition of ON *Guðrøðr*, a name also found in different forms around this time for chieftains in both Ireland and England. Also as was discussed in Chapter 14 it is most possible that the Northmen, or some of them, who moved on to Iberia/Spain had come from the Cotentin/Coutances. Given the names is it even possible that the 'Gunnor' who 'married' Richard I of Normandy could have been the daughter of this Gundered? Although just a speculative thought this would be an issue well worth examining in more detail in the future.

of the Apostle Santiago whose lands they had devastated'. Ann Christys says: 'Guillelmus Sanchez could be one of two figures: the obscure Gonzalo Sanchez who was held responsible for the death of king Sancho I of Leon at Castrelo in 966 (Historia Silense: 170),[1] or William II Sanchez of Gascony (c. 961 - c. 996),[2] although the latter is not known to have been active in Galicia.'[3]

The idea that the Gascon count William Sanche is really meant here was proposed by Justo Pérez de Urbel in 1956. He argued that the Gascon William Sanche was making a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela when he defeated the Northmen.[4] He is followed in this by some notable subsequent historians.[5] This is certainly not impossible. Renée Mussot-Goulard in her reconstruction of the early history and genealogy of the early 'princes de Gascogne' argued that the Gascon count William Sanche married Urraca the widowed daughter of the king of Pamplona 'Garsie-Sanche' after July 972, and he stayed many years in Navarre and fought with his brother-in-law the king of Navarre 'Sanche-Abarca' against the Muslim Al-Mansûr (*Almanzor/Al-Mansur*) in about 976 before returning to Gascony after the death of his 'cousin germaine' William of Bordeaux.[6] If this is true (and other historians have different opinions)

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[1] For the view that it was a count Gonzalo Sanchez who forced the Northmen out of Galicia (based on later texts), see *inter alia*: V. Almazán, *Gallaecia Scandinavica*, p. 107; E. Morales Romero, *Historia de los vikingos en España*, p. 191; *idem*, *Os viquingo en Galicia*, pp. 123-30; M. R. García Álvarez, 'Sisnando Menéndez, mayordomo real y obispo de Santiago', *Compostellanum*, 13 (1968) pp. 197-239, at p. 234; R. P. A. Dozy, 'Les Normands en Espagne', pp. 307-9, 313. Summarised by C. Sánchez Pardo, 'Los ataques vikingos', p. 70, as follows: 'Los normandos continúan sus saqueos con libertad sin que el rey de León, Ramiro III, pudiese hacer nada por detenerlos ya que era un niño de siete años custodiado por una monja. Sin embargo, no lograron entrar en Santiago, ya que estaba protegido por fuertes murallas torreadas, separadas por profundos fosos llenos de agua construidos en época de Sisnando. Esta situación continuó hasta que el obispo de Compostela, San Rosendo, organizó un ejército dirigido por el conde Gonzalo Sánchez, que, « sediento de venganza » atacó a los normandos cuando se disponían a embarcar de nuevo cerca de Ferrol. Este ejército logró vencer a los invasores, matar al mismo rey Gunderedo, quemar parte de las naves, recuperar el botín y liberar a los prisioneros.'

[2] Why William is called by Christys 'William II Sanchez of Gascony' is a mystery to me. Who was William I Sanchez meant to have been?

[3] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 84.

[4] J. Pérez de Urbel, 'Los Primeros siglos de la Reconquista (Años 711-1038)', in J. Pérez de Urbel and R. del Arco Garay, *España Cristiana - comienzo de la Reconquista (711-1038)*, *Historia de España*, vol. 6, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal (Madrid, 1956), pp. 1-348, at pp. 153-54.

[5] For example M. C. Díaz y Díaz, M. V. Pardo Gómez, D. V. Pintos, O. de Celanova, *Vida y milagros de San Rosendo* (Coruña, 1990), p. 131, n. 42; F. Alonso Romero, 'La navegación e itinerario del ejército normando de Gunderedo', p. 81. H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147)*, p. 146, discusses the idea in some detail and eventually seems to incline towards it, although he quite rightly says it is impossible to prove.

[6] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 131 and nn. 39 and 40. This is based of the identification of the 'Guillelmus dux Navarre cognominatus Sanctus' in Rodulfus Glaber's *Histories* who fought against the Saracen 'Almuzor' who had come 'ex Africanis partibus' and 'ocupans pene universam Hispanie regionem usque in australes Galliarum fines, plurimasque Christianorum dedere strages'; for which see M. Prou (ed.), *Raoul Glaber: les cinq livres de ses histoires (900-1044)* (Paris, 1886), book 2, chap. 9, p. 44, with the Gascon William Sanche. J. M. Lacarra, *Historia politica del reino de Navarra*, vol. 1, p. 169, n. 91, made this identification, as previously had J. de Jaurgain (*La Vasconie*, vol. 1, p. 186) who suggested additionally that *Sancho Abarca* 'se soit porté au secours de son beau-frère [William Sanche], d'autant mieux que, d'après Rodolphe Glaber, le roi de Pampelune fut aidé par Guillaume-Sanche dans ses guerres'.

it is certainly possible that William Sanche had made a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela a little before this (in 969 or 970), whether from Gascony or Navarre, but this remains just a conjecture and can never be proved.

But, and in addition, it is rather hard to imagine that the scribe of the *Chronicle of Sampiro* as copied into the later *Historia Silense* would refer to him as *Comes namque Guillelmus Sancionis* when there was no count of this name in Galicia at this time or later, whereas there was of course one in Gascony. So, was the *Chronicle of Sampiro* possibly referring to a battle in Gascony and not in Galicia? Or, perhaps more likely given the chronology, was the report in the pseudo foundation charter of Saint-Sever where William Sanche defeated the Northmen with the help of Saint Sever (with very clear parallels to Saint James) taken either from the *Chronicle of Sampiro/ Historia Silense* or from an oral memory of William Sanche's earlier defeat of the Northmen in Galicia with the help of Saint James?

Overall I do tend to think that there must be some relationship between the so-called foundation charter of the monastery of Saint-Sever where Saint Sever himself miraculously appeared on a white horse to assist the Gascon *Guilelmus Sancius comes* to defeat the Northmen, just like Saint James (Santiago) had supposedly done so often in battles (real or illusory) in Spain,[1] and the *Chronicle of Sampiro/Historia Silense* where a Count William Sánchez (*Comes namque Guillelmus Sancionis*) had received the 'aid of the Apostle Santiago' in his victory over the Northmen in Galicia. Was there a connection and if so in which direction? This question is worthy of further scholarly investigation. The Saint-Sever *Beatus* was originally taken from an earlier Spanish text although it contains many non-Spanish elements,[2] but that the very earliest report of this Gascon Count William Sanche's supposed battle had later been added into the remaining blank pages of the Saint-Sever *Beatus* should not be forgotten.

Secondly, and now moving back to France, there is a story told by Ademar of Chabannes in his *Chronicle* written in the 1020s. Ademar tells us, to use text C,[3] that, perhaps early in the second decade of the eleventh century:[4]

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[1] R. Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, p. 237: 'The history of the cult of Santiago is peculiarly rich in [...] frauds.'

[2] For which see J. Williams, 'Le *Beatus* de Saint-Sever, État des questions'; J. Vezin 'Observations paléographiques sur l'Apocalypse de Saint-Sever'; Y. Zaluska, 'Le *Beatus* de Saint-Sever à travers sa composition matérielle et ses généalogies bibliques'; P. K. Klein, 'Les sources non hispaniques et la genèse iconographique du *Beatus* de Saint-Sever; and 'Table Ronde' and the 'Conclusions' of C. Higounet, all in J. Cabanot (ed.), *Saint-Sever. Millénaire de l'Abbaye*, at pp. 251-64, 265-78, 279-92, 317-34, 335-40, 341-45 respectively.

[3] I am using Lair's terminology once again.

[4] The dating and context of this event will be discussed more in Chapter 16.

En ce temps-là, une foule immense de Normands venus du Danemark et d'Irlande aborda Port-Aquitain[1] avec une flotte innombrable. Et comme leurs ancêtres l'avaient fait, ils tentèrent de désoler et de réduire en captivité l'Aquitaine entière. Aussi le très valeureux duc Guillaume fit partout appel aux évêques pour engager le peuple à implorer le secours du Seigneur par des jeûnes et des litanies. Quant à lui, rassemblant une forte troupe de guerriers d'élite, il atteint le rivage de la mer, au mois d'août, à la tombée de la nuit, et établit son camp près des Normands. À la vue de la multitude des chrétiens, les païens, frappés de terreur, passèrent toute la nuit à creuser de petites fosses tout autour, qu'ils recouvrirent de mottes de gazon pour y faire tomber les cavaliers non avertis. Au petit matin donc, sans précautions, l'armée, avec le duc chevauchant en première ligne, dans une charge effrénée des chevaux contre les païens, tombe bientôt dans les fosses. Les chevaux s'écroulent avec leurs cavaliers alourdis par le poids de leurs armes, et beaucoup sont faits prisonniers par les païens ; les derniers rangs de l'armée, prenant garde un peu tard à la ruse, sautent de leurs montures. Le duc lui-même, abordant à cheval une fosse, s'effondre la tête la première, et, chargé du poids de ses armes, il allait tomber dans les mains de ses adversaires, si Dieu, qui le protège toujours, ne lui avait fourni la force et la présence d'esprit de sauter d'un grand élan, et de rejoindre les siens d'une course très rapide. Bientôt on arrêta le combat à cause des prisonniers, de crainte qu'ils ne fussent tués ; ils étaient en effet parmi les plus nobles. Ce jour se passa en hésitations dans les deux camps, et la nuit qui suivit, à la faveur de la pleine mer, les païens grimpent à toute allure sur leurs vaisseaux avec les captifs et s'échappent avec le secours de l'Océan : jamais plus ils n'inquiétèrent ces rivages. Le duc cependant envoya pour la rançon des captifs d'immenses quantités d'argent : pour chaque homme il paya son poids d'argent et, aussi, les racheta tous.[2]

So here we have a story written well before the composition of the pseudo-charter of Saint-Sever and the *History of the Abbots of Condom* which tells of a great victory of a *duc* William

[1] This place will be discussed in Chapter 16 of the present work.

[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Y. Chauvin and G. Pon, book 3, chap. 53, pp. 266-67. For the Latin text of Ademar's manuscript C (actually a combined text) see *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain, III. 53, p. 172; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 203-4. For MS A see *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. J. Chavanon, p. 176; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 203-4. MS H can be found in J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 203-5; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. J. Chavanon, pp. 208-9; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. P. Bourgain, pp. 12-13.

(William V count of Poitiers and duke of Aquitaine, nowadays called William the Great)[1] over the Northmen in which William had been mounted on a horse but saved from death or capture by God and eventually, although the battle was indecisive, the Northmen with their captives retreated to their ships and escaped over the 'Ocean', and that they never again bothered these shores - of Aquitaine.[2]

One might even add that in an earlier chapter Ademar relates a story of William II Taillefer, count of Angoulême:

> Guillaume Taillefer (*Sector Ferri*) qui avait reçu ce surnom dans un combat contre les Normands où ni les uns ni les autres ne l'avaient emporté, lutta le lendemain en combat singulier, par suite d'un pacte, contre leur roi Storin : de Cortain, son épée très résistante, que le forgeron Wieland avait travaillée,[3] il le pourfendit[4] lui et sa cuirasse[5] d'un seul

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[1] There is a abundant literature on William the Great, see *inter alia* A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, vol. 1, pp. 139-220; C. Treffort, 'Le comte de Poitiers, duc d'Aquitaine, et l'Église aux alentours de l'an mil (970-1030)', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 43. 172 (2000), pp. 395-445; P. Boissonnade, 'Les relations des ducs d'Aquitaine, comtes de Poitiers, avec les États chrétiens d'Aragon et de Navarre (1014-1137)', *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 3.10 (1934-1935), pp. 264-316; B. S. Bachrach, 'Toward a Reappraisal of William the Great, Duke of Aquitaine (995-1030)', *Journal of Médiéval History*, 5 (1979), pp. 11-21; *idem*, '"Potius Rex quam esse Dux putabatur": Some Observations Concerning Adémar of Chabannes' Panegyric on Duke William the Great', *Haskins Society Journal*, 1 (1989), pp. 11-21.

[2] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, pp. 216-18, uses this incursion (which he places in 1017) to suggest that the story told of in the 'foundation charter' of Saint-Sever is not as *fabuleux* as it may seem at this late date. Much more recently the historian of Gascony Guilhem Pépin follows Marca's line of reasoning by saying that 'La bataille de Taller est sûrement le résultat d'une descente viking sur les côtes landaises tout comme la bataille qui opposa des Vikings et le duc d'Aquitaine-comte de Poitiers sur les côtes vendéennes en 1003 […]. La proximité des lieux et des dates laisse à penser que la bataille de Taller partage les mêmes caractéristiques […]. Suite à cet exemple, il n'y a pas lieu de penser que cette bataille de Taller soit légendaire. Il est très probable que cette bataille se passa dans des circonstances très similaires à celle, postérieure, de Port-Aquitain. Sauf que dans le cas de Taller, il s'agit d'une victoire face aux Normands'.
Available online at http://www.passion-histoire.net/viewtopic.php?f=51&t=5535&start=45. Where Pépin gets this date of 1003 for a battle which opposed the 'Vikings' with the *duc* of Aquitaine and count of Poitiers on the coasts of the Vendée is complete a mystery. For more analysis of this question see Chapter 16.

[3] Neither MS H nor MS A mention that the sword was forged by Wieland (*Walander*).

[4] *Pourfendre*: To slay and cut someone in two with a sword.

[5] *Sa cuirasse*: his armour or coat of mail is not actually mentioned in MSS A and C; only in MS H do we hear that: 'Willelmus denique Sector Ferri, qui hoc cognomen adeptus est quia *loricatum* [my emphasis = clad in mail] Nortmannum in luctamine [...]' (cf. J. Lair, ed., *Études critiques*, p. 148). It should also be noted that MS H does not mention a 'king' called Storim. Jules Lair's MS H of Ademar's work is called by him the 'Copie de Pithou' because it is contained in Pierre Pithou's *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII ad ann. DCCCCXC Scriptores Coaetanei XII* (Paris, 1558), pp. 416-24; it is conserved in the Latin MS *BNF* no. 6190, and starts at Ademar's book 3, chap. 20, the relevant passage can be found in *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, 'Appendice, Aquitaniae Historiae Fragmentum', p. 202, and in *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, p. 7. For an introduction to and the full text of MS H, called by R. Landes 'alpha', see R. Landes 'Annexe', in *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, pp. CX-CXVI, 1-14. As Jules Lair says regarding MS H (*ibid*., p. 148, n. 2): 'Selon H, Guillaume Taillefer est ainsi nommé parce que dans un combat singulier (*luctamine*) il pourfendre entre la poitrine et le ventre un Normand cuirassé, et cela d'un seul coup de son epée appellée Cort, très dure'; but I think he is somewhat wrong to say regarding MS A (*ibid.*) that, 'Selon A, après un combat contre les Normands, Guillaume convient de se battre en combat singulier avec leur roi Storim, qu'il tranche en deux malgré sa cuirasse, par le milieu du corps, d'un seul coup de son epée, Cort, très dure', the 'malgré sa cuirasse' seems to be an assumption on the basis of the epithet *Sector Ferri* given to William, as does Y. Chauvin and G. Pon's translation of MS C.

coup en pleine poitrine ; il termina ses jours et fut enseveli près de la basilique de Saint-Cybard.[1]

William II Taillefer was the count of Angoulême until about 945 when he retired to the monastery of Saint-Cybard at Angoulême, where he died on 6 August 962.[2] Thus if this story has any basis in historical reality, which may be doubted,[3] this fight must have happened before 945.[4] Yves Chauvin and Georges Pon point out: 'Le nom de l'arme - l'epée *Cortain* d'Ogier le Danois - et celui de forgeron Wieland montrent l'influence épique qui s'est exercée sur le moine de Saint-Cybard.'[5] But for our purposes here we have another Aquitanian William fighting and

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[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 28, p. 232. This is a translation of Ademar's MS C, for the Latin of which see J. Lair, ed., *Études critiques*, pp. 148-49 (cf. also *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, book 3, chap. 28, pp. 148-49): 'Willemus quoque Sector Ferri [the 'Iron Cutter' or 'Iron Hewer', hence the French *Taillefer*], qui hoc cognomen indectus [*indeptus* in MS A, and *adeptus* in MS H] est quia, commisso prelio cum Nortmannis, et neutra parte cedente, postera die pacti causa cum rege eorum Storim segulari (*sic*) [*solito* in MS A] conflictu deluctans, ense Corto nomine, durissimo, quem Walander faber cuserat, per media pectoris secuit simul cum torace una modo percussione, claudsit diem, sepultus est juxta basilicam Sancti Eparchii.' For a comparison of Ademar's three manuscripts (H, A and C) of this passage see J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 148-49 and notes. For MS A see *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, book 3, chap. 28, p. 149.

[2] A. Debord, 'Les fouilles du castrum d'Andone', *Aquitania*, I, 1983 (Bordeaux, 1984), pp. 173-97, at p. 183; *idem*, *La société laïque*, pp. 99-103; L. Bourgeois (ed.), *Une résidence des comtes d'Angoulême autour de l'an Mil: le castrum d'Andone (Fouilles d'André Debord)* (Caen, 2009), pp. 387, 391; *idem*, *Andone. Archéologie d'un château des comtes d'Angoulême autour de l'an mil* (Angoulême, 2011), pp. 3-4. This is at least one view.

[3] Earlier in this thesis the battle fought in the Limousin in 930, which was a defeat for the Northmen, was discussed and how this battle reported by Flodoard of Reims was probably that described by Ademar of Chabannes in his *Chronicle* (book 3, chap. 21) as taking place at *Ad Destricios* in the Limousin. In Philippe Lauer's opinion (*Robert Ier et Raoul*, p. 59) this battle became legendary, to which he adds: 'C'est à elle qu'on rattache les exploits du comte d'Angoulême Guillaume Taillefer.'

[4] It is suggested that he might have gained the county in about 930 or even 926 (see for example L. Bourgeois, *Andone*, p. 3), but all this is very unsure. Ademar's already very epic story was built on and grotesquely deformed in the thirteenth century in the first part of the *Chronique Saintongeaise* called the *Toute l'histoire de France* (*Tote listoire de France*); for which see A. de Mandach, *Chronique dite Saintongeaise* (Tübingen, 1970), pp. 7, 17, 82-85; J. Renaud, *Les Viking de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine*, pp. 56-57. J. Renaud (*ibid*., p. 61) says that the *Cartulary of Saint-Etienne-de-Vaux* reports that *Guillaume II Taillefer* occupied the Île d'Oléron after having chased out the 'Vikings'; A. de Mandach, *Chronique dite Saintongeaise*, p. 84, falls into the same trap, although he follows J. Boussard (in his edition of the *Historia pontificum et comitum engolismensium* which is based almost exclusively on Ademar's *Chronicle*) in having it be *Guillaume Taillefer I*, who he has mistakenly being count of Angoulême between 916 and 962; but in fact the cartulary says nothing of the sort. In his 'Introduction' to his 1867 edition of the *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Saint-Etienne de Vaux de l'ordre de Saint-Benoit suivi des Chartes du Prieuré conventuel de Notre-Dame de la Garde en Arvert de l'Ordre de Granmont* (Niort, 1868), the abbé T. Grasilier, p. III and n. 2 (who Mandach references but Renaud does not), mentions the 'chevaliers de Taillefer de Léon' gaining possession of the lands of the churches of the island of Oléron 'qui ils avaient reconquise sur les Normands'; but the only reference he gives for this is A. Peigné-Delacourt, *Les Normands dans le Noyonnais, IXe et Xe siècles* (Noyon, 1868) (which Grasilier mistakenly calls *Les Normands dans le Soissonnais*, which may be just a printing error); but Peigné-Delacourt's work is concerned in the relevant place with the thirteenth-century *Tote listoire de France*, it has nothing at all to do with the actual cartulary of the abbey of Saint-Etienne-de-Vaux.

[5] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 232, n. 270. In personal communication Pierre Bauduin says: 'Sur la matière épique qui influence Adémar : cela semble très précoce. A quel moment apparaissent les noms cités dans la littérature épique ?' This is a good question which I unfortunately cannot explore here. The smith 'Wieland' (or similar) goes back a long way in Germanic and Anglo-Saxon 'epic' literature; regarding the sword *Cortain* of Ogier the Dane the very earliest mentions of this are obscure to say the least. This whole issue deserved and begs a thesis of its own.

killing another Northman in heroic style; there is even a slight similarity between the story of *Airald* in the Condom text 'protegé par sa cuirasse' and *Storim*[1] in Ademar's story whose mail coat (*loricatum*)[2] had not prevented William *Sector Ferri* from cutting him in two. Was Ademar's story perhaps the origin of the tradition in the story told of in the Condom text?[3]

The possible origins of these Northmen

Accepting - and if only for the sake of argument - that there was a battle at 'Taller' or perhaps more likely elsewhere in the Landes or the Bordelais in *c*.981-82 or thereabouts, and even if this was presaged by a 'first engagement' with count William of Bordeaux in *c*.976, and another slightly later fight where William of Bordeaux was killed, as claimed by Mussot-Goulard, what have other historians said of the origin of the Northmen involved? In fact, they have said very little. Béatrice Leroy says that the Scandinavians arrived *encore* in Gascony in 982 and that they were 'sans doute des bandes attardées de Norvégiens'. According to her they captured the 'Duc d'Aquitaine' (who I presume must be William count of Bordeaux) and 'le comte de Gascogne Guillaume Sanche (977-999) le rachète'.[4] If *attardées* here has the sense of bands who had lingered rather than arrived late, which I think it may do, this seems to be just a reiteration of the conventional line in French historiography of the Northmen in France[5] that it was 'Norwegians' who from 843 onwards were responsible for all the attacks on and south of the Loire, which was not the case. Furthermore, these *Norvégiens* only arrived in 982 according to Leroy and thus she is telescoping all these events into a single year, and she says the victory at Taller 'redonne la paix à la Gascogne'.[6] But where had these Norwegians *attardés* come from and where did they go afterwards? Leroy offers no ideas. Next, the local school teacher J. Larrègue says with some confidence that: 'Le chef normand Harald,[7] sur lequel le cartulaire de Condom donne beaucoup de détails, appartenait vraisemblablement à la famille des vickings [*sic*] installés en Irlande et ces incursions, après le traité de Saint-Clair-sur Epte en 911 avec le Roi de France, qui met fin à leurs invasions, laisseraient penser qu'il s'agit peut-être de desperados ou de marginaux, mais le péril était grave.'[8] Larrègue packs so many unstated assumptions and conjectures into this single sentence that I will leave it here.

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[1] In manuscripts A and C.
[2] At least in manuscript H.
[3] I thank Pierre Bauduin for this interesting question.
[4] B. Leroy, 'L'an Mil sur les deux versants des Pyrénées', in *Colloque sur le millénaire de la bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 392 (Dax, 1983), pp. 563-65, at p. 563.
[5] This is a historiography that goes back at least to Lucien Musset but in some ways also to Walther Vogel.
[6] *Ibid*., B. Leroy.
[7] It is not at all said that 'Harald' was their chieftain.
[8] J. Larrègue, 'Une certitude : la fosse Gombaud', p. 592.

Finally, what about Renée Mussot-Goulard? Perhaps we can expect more from such an eminent scholar. Just after the publication of *Les princes de Gascogne* she wrote in her short article 'La bataille de Taller' that the Northmen responsible had come from their 'établissements récents, peut-être des îles anglo-normandes'.[1] She presents no evidence or support for this idea[2] although it may have come from a belief in Dudo of Saint-Quentin's story regarding Northmen leaving the Seine in *c*.965 with guides from Coutances, but if so Mussot-Goulard does not say this. In *Les princes de Gascogne* she offers no real suggestion regarding the origin of these Northmen but she seems to suggest they had been in Gascony for some time. She says rather vaguely that the treaty of 'Saint-Clair sur Epte' had not liberated the coasts of the Landes and of Labourd from the *Normands*;[3] but she does not pursue this idea and offers no precise date or dates. Elsewhere in connection with the 'les raids meurtriers d'al-Mansour' over the Pyrenees she speculates , 'On peut se demander si le duc gascon n'a pas craint une conjonction des forces, un enrôlement des Normands pas le chef musulman', and she then says that the powerful local families in West Gascony 's'étaient emparées des biens des églises à Bayonne, à Aire, Dax ou Lescar', and that 'ces puissants laïcs ne semblaient pas troublés par le voisinage normand', to which she adds, 'les Normands pouvaient au besoin les aider dans le maintien de leur autorité', and that: 'La restauration du pouvoir ducal demeurait aléatoire tant que les Normands seconderaient ces puissants laïcs.'[4] As a conclusion she asserts: 'Dans la lutte de Guillaume contre les Normands de Taller, il faut considérer que l'un des mobiles a été le désir d'affirmer son autorité sur les grands alleutiers de la région de l'Adour qui avaient construit de petites puissances très redoutables […]. En les privant de secours des Normands on hâterait leur soumission. C'est pourquoi la bataille engagée par Guillaume-Sanche revêtait une réelle importance. Elle imposa donc une stratégie subtile, un appel à l'opinion, une célébration grandiose de la victoire.'[5] I do not know what evidence there is for this apparent *voisinage* of the Northmen and their supposed assistance/help for the secular leaders in West Gascony. In terms of the Northmen, rather than the local lay/secular powers, this all seems to be just conjecture and wishful thinking. In a similar vein (making unsubstantiated conjectures that are dressed up as facts) she writes: 'Si la situation générale était critique, en 977, aux

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, 'La bataille de Taller', p. 555.
[2] The only evidence Mussot-Goulard gives is that (*ibid*): 'On sait, comme élément de comparaison, que les Normands de Normandie franque ne sont pas totalement stabilisés pendant le Xe siècle: de nouveaux contingents arrivent encore tandis que d'autres se déplacent à l'intérieur du royaume de France'; here she only references (*ibid*., n. 49) 'M de Boüard, *Histoire de Normandie*, La Normandie ducale'.
[3] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 129.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 134.
[5] *Ibid*.

frontières de l'Islam, elle l'était aussi à l'Ouest où les Normands harcelaient toujours certains rivages atlantiques, les bouches de l'Adour, et avaient de forts appuis à Bordeaux. Leur implantation en Normandie depuis 911, pouvait faire craindre qu'on dût aussi leur céder des terres landaises.'[1] Similarly she says the *Normands* were 'installés dans la boucle de l'Adour' and that by attacking them William Sanche was engaging in a 'guerre d'extermination, ou [...] leur complete assimilation',[2] which in my opinion is just novel-like imagination.

Bishop Galactoire, Mimizan and the Northmen

In Chapter 8 it was noted how Pierre de Marca wrongly conjectured that after the capture of Bordeaux in 848 the Northmen responsible had 'en suite pillerent le Bourg de Medoc, qui est peut-estre celui de Teste de Buchs'. His mistake was to misidentify *Mettalum*, which means Melle in Poitou, with *Médoc* in the *pays de Buch* around the *Bassin d'Arcachon* on the Atlantic coast south-west of Bordeaux in northern Gascon Landes, and more specifically on the south side of the bay at La Teste-de-Buch. This misidentified place then became for Marca the long-term base for the Northmen's 'armée navale; d'où ils faisoient en suite leurs depredations, par toutes les Provinces de France'.[3]

Here I would like to explore, although regrettably only quite briefly, a similar question: that of Mimizan (dep. Landes) in the *pays de Born* slightly to the south of the Médoc along the coast of the Landes. It has sometimes been claimed that Mimizan may have been a place where Northmen coming to Gascony could have made landfall or even have had a temporary or more permanent base. There is nothing inherently unlikely about this idea because during the 'viking' period (and still to this day) Mimizan was certainly linked to the 'Ocean' by a waterway (the *Courant de Mimizan*) that led to the *Étang* or *Lac d'Aureilhan* and it could on occasion have proved to be a convenient stopping point or temporary base for the Northmen on their way up and down the Aquitanian coast. The most important although somewhat flawed work to consider here is the long and very interesting article of the *curé/doyen* of Mimizan Lucien Départ called 'Mimizan. Notice historique'. This was published in the *Bulletin de la société de Borda* in 1883 and 1884.[4]

Départ's point of departure, if one will excuse the pun, was his examination of various mottes around the *Lac d'Aureilhan* which he suggested were built by the local populations in the ninth

[1] R. Mussot-Goulard, *Les princes de Gascogne*, p. 131.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 135.
[3] P. de Marca, *Histoire de Béarn*, p. 192.
[4] As earlier cited: L. (M. l'abbé) Départ, 'Mimizan. Notice historique', *Bulletin de la Société de Borda,* vol. 8 (Dax, 1883), pp. 45-56, 89-105, 213-30; vol. 9 (Dax, 1884), pp. 145-51, 185-200.

century to protect them from Northmen.[1] The problem with this is that it is just a heroic assumption with no archaeological or other support, and all subsequent studies of these and other such mottes in the region have generally concluded that the date of their construction is completely uncertain but that some of them at least could go back to a prehistoric period. But in order to support his thesis Départ also brings into the equation one of the Lessons found in the *Legend of Saint Galactoire* as contained in the *Breviary of Lescar*, which as discussed in Chapter 8 was likely first written in the late twelfth century or perhaps even later and concerns (historically) the death of Bishop Galactoire in *c*.507 supposedly at the hands of the Visigoths near to Mimizan. Départ's long discussion of the contents of the *Breviary of Lescar* and his translation of many of the Lessons of his 'Office' is most interesting and useful and it may be compared with the opinions of V. Dubarat.[2] But for what concerns us here, the Northmen, Départ draws particular attention to one of these Lessons which says of the 'Goths' that: 'Chaque année avec une flotte bien équipée ils entrent dans la mer intérieure de Mimizan situé au pays bordelais et abordent sur ses terres. De là, plus cruels que les bêtes féroces, ils se répandent au loin dans la Vasconie qu'ils parcourent et ravagent régulièrement tous les ans.'[3] To cut a rather long story short, Départ's take on this is that: 'Á l'occasion des invasions des Visigoths, bien des circonstances et des faits signalés dans l'Office de Saint-Galactoire semblent appartenir moins à ce peuple qu'aux Normands. Le souvenir des cruautés exercées par ces derniers était, au XIIe siècle, époque présumée de la composition de cet Office, tellement imprimé dans la mémoire des populations que l'auteur de cet Office donne à l'invasion visigothe les caractères des invasions normandes.' Maybe it does but this is based on the assumption that the Northmen had come regularly to Aquitaine before coming to the Landes and specifically to Mimizan after the fall of Bordeaux in 848, and indeed again in the tenth century. His whole passage on this subject is reproduced in the note below and it contains many gross errors regarding the Northmen's activities probably because it is mostly based on the works of Pierre de Marca and J. J. Monlezun,[4] and thereby the texts they had used. He concludes

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[1] *Ibid*., 1884, pp. 145-51.

[2] V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar*.

[3] L. Départ, 'Mimizan. Notice historique', p. 220. For the original Latin text see V. Dubarat, *Le bréviaire de Lescar*, p.37: 'Et classe parata, venientes annuatim per medium terraneum mare applicabant circa Mimisanum in Burdigalensi diocesi. Et exinde omnibus beluis crudeliores totam Vasconiam consuetudinare discurrebant.' Elsewhere Départ (*ibid*., p. 229) translates this slightly differently as, 'Chaque année, montés sur une flotte bien équipée, ils entrent dans la baie de Mimizan, au diocèse de Bordeaux, et font une descente sur ses terres. De là, plus cruels que des bêtes féroces, ils se répandent au loin dans la Vasconie et la ravagent régulièrement chaque année'.

[4] Cf. J. J. Monlezun, *Histoire de la Gascogne*. After mentioning the incursions of the *Francs* and *Sarrasins* Départ writes (*ibid*., pp. 228-29): 'Les féroces enfants du Nord arrivèrent sur leurs barques légères pour envahir par tous les ports de l'Océan, et les fleuves qui y débouchent, les plaines de la Gascogne. Déjà en 810 le grand empereur

that after the capture of Bordeaux in 848 the Northmen 'pénétraient dans nos contrées par les ports de Capbreton, de Contis et par celui de Mimizan qui était encore florissant à cette époque'. This is pure speculation dressed up as fact and there is no evidence for it at all. But I presume it was at or around this time that Départ would have the mottes around the *Lac d'Aureilhan* being built.

Strangely Départ then says nothing more about any Northmen in Gascony, and specifically in the Landes, in the ninth century, but rather jumps straight to the battle 'dans les landes de Talleras'[1] where 'Guillaume Sance, le grand, l'illustre duc et comte de Gascogne, les défit complètement', and then he mentions 'les ossements blanchis des barbares marquèrent, longtemps le lieu où ils avaient été anéantis', which is a reference to the text found in the *History of the Abbots of Condom*. Départ somewhat strangely places this battle in 923.[2] Then mostly based on the initial thoughts of Joesph Légé, the abbot of Duhart in the Landes, in his 1870 article 'Notice sur l'Abbé Lalanne'[3] Départ states that after this battle: 'Peut-être même les

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Charlemagne les avait vu apparaître sur les côtes de la Provence. En voyant leur audace, leurs manœuvres hardies, le vieux héros, les larmes aux yeux, s'était écrié « Hélas ! si de mon vivant ils viennent ainsi menacer mes peuples que ne feront-ils pas lorsque je ne serais plus là ? » En effet, lui seul avec son vaste génie militaire et sa puissante main était capable de les tenir en respect. Lui disparu, son immense empire se disloqua sous l'effort plus que séculaire des Normands non moins que sous celui des guerres civiles de ses successeurs. Pendant plus de cent ans, ces hommes terribles ravagèrent chaque année l'une ou l'autre des provinces de l'Allemagne, de la Hollande, de la Neustrie, de la Bretagne, de l'Aquitaine et même de la Provence et souvent plusieurs provinces à la fois. An mois de septembre 841 ou 843 [*sic*], ils se montrent devant Bordeaux qu'ils assiégent mais qui résiste vaillamment. Ne pouvant forcer ses solides remparts, ils ravagent tout le pays avec une incroyable cruauté. Le fer et le feu dévorent Bazas, Sos ou plutôt Sore dans les Landes, Lectoure, Dax avec ses nobles remparts romains, ses édifices magnifiques et ses thermes splendides. Puis Lapurdum ou Bayonne, Oloron, Lescar, voient leurs tours, leurs murailles, leurs basiliques, leurs oratoires, leurs autels renversés, jonchant le sol de leurs débris calcinés, les ossements des saints violés et dispersés au loin. Tarbes, elle-même placée si loin au fond de la Bigorre n'échappe pas à leur fureur. Ce n'est qu'après tous ces massacres, après tous ces ravages inouïs que le duc Totilus put réunir une armée assez puissante et assez nombreuse pour tailler en pièces ces terribles Normands et en délivrer la province. Mais vaincus, ils ne tardaient pas à reparaître aussi pillards, aussi cruels qu'auparavant. Bordeaux, assiégé dans une seconde incursion [*sic*] sans doute, fut pris par la trahison des Juifs en 848. Ils pénétraient dans nos contrées par les ports de Capbreton, de Contis et par celui de Mimizan qui était encore florissant à cette époque.'

[1] Which as mentioned earlier in this chapter Départ thought (following Joseph Légé, cf. also the note below) may be 'Taller?'.

[2] L. Départ, 'Mimizan. Notice historique', pp. 229-30. The idea of 923 Départ (*ibid*., p. 229 and n. 3) takes from P.-D. du Buisson, *Historiae monasterii S. Severi*, vol. 1, referencing pp. 134, 136, 14. Du Buisson's whole argument, at pp. 134-49, was concerned with arguing with Marca's dating of the foundation of Saint-Sever to *c*.982. I will not enter into this discussion here, but the date of 923 for a battle in the plain of *Taleras* is certainly wrong. As an aside it is true that there was a major defeat of the Northmen in 923 as reported by Flodoard (see Flodoard *s.a.* 923, *Annales*, p. 12; *Annals*, p. 7: 'The Northmen raided Aquitaine and the Auvergne, William [II] the duke of the Aquitanians, and Raymond [count of Toulouse] fought against them and 12,000 of the Northmen were killed there'), and it was discussed in Chapter 12. Note that this victory involved yet another William: William II Duke of Aquitaine.

[3] J. Légé, 'Notice sur l'Abbé Lalanne', p. 245. This article is very difficult to obtain therefore I copy immediately below the quote from it given by Départ (*ibid*., pp. 225-26). After mentioning the battle where Bishop Galactoire was supposedly killed near to Mimizan, Légé asks, 'Où était le lieu du combat ?'. To which he responds: 'Ici la tradition est muette et les documents de toute espèce font défaut toutefois essayons de donner une réponse. Quatre siècles [actually five centuries says Départ] après le martyre de Galactoire, en 1010, dans l'énumération des paroisses que le duc Bernard Guillaume donne au monastère de Saint-Sever, nous trouvons Saint-Michel de Bias,

débris de leurs [the Northmen's] bandes vivement poursuivis furent-ils également défaits dans les environs de Mimizan, lorsqu'ils s'enfuyaient pour se réfugier sur leurs barques attachées dans le port, ainsi que M. l'abbé Légé et d'autres historiens[1] l'admettent non sans vraisemblance.'[2]

In my opinion Départ's (and indeed in some ways also Légé's) whole conception regarding both the arrival of Northmen at Mimizan in 848 and their retreat to there after the purported battle of 'Taller' a century and a half later, based as it is only is on an assumption that the *mottes* around the *Lac d'Aureilhan* were constructed as defences against the Northmen and a particular interpretation of one (or more) Lessons in the late *Breviary of Lescar* regarding the early sixth-century Bishop Galactoire and the Goths, intriguing though it undoubtedly is, cannot be relied upon to prove anything at all about the Northmen in the Landes and much less about the purported battle in the 'vast plain of Taleras' in the late tenth century.[3]

Summary conclusion

What may we reasonably conclude about a Scandinavian incursion into Gascony in the 970s, perhaps even lasting into the early 980s? Not much with any certainty.

Sainte-Eulalie de Borno et Notre-Dame de Mimizan. Aussitôt un monastère de Bénédictins s'élève dans cette dernière paroisse. Est-ce pour rappeler le grand souvenir du martyre de Saint-Galactoire que Bernard fait ce don et que le couvent de Saint-Sever envoie là une colonie de moines ? On est libre de le croire. Mais ce n'est pas, selon nous, pour ce motif seulement. Nous pensons qu'une grande bataille s'est livrée près du port de Mimizan à l'époque des invasions Normandes, sur les lieux mêmes où l'on voit encore de nos jours la maison conventuelle. Ceci ne paraîtra plus une hypothèse si l'on apprend que des monceaux énormes d'ossements gisent sous terre autour de l'église aujourd'hui paroissiale, au chevet de l'ancien choeur, puis à l'extrémité de la ronte [*sic*] agricole sous la maison Berran. Après la bataille on dut recueillir pieusement les ossements des guerriers épars çà et là dans la plaine, les placer en un seul lieu sous la protection de la prière en élevant au milieu d'eux un temple et un monastère richement doté pour la subsistance des religieux. Peu d'années, auparavant Guillaume Sanche, père de Bernard, faisait bâtir le monastère de Saint-Sever, et Gombaud, frère de Guillaume, élevait l'hôpital de Fosseguimbaut à Taller, dans ce lieu même ou ils avaient écrasé les Normands venus par l'embouchure de l'Adour à Capbreton.' There are many things that one could remark on this passage, particularly regarding the formation of the *temporel* of the abbey of Saint-Sever as well as of course regarding the circumstances and date of the foundation of the hospice at 'Fosseguimbaut à Taller', but I leave the matter here; but it all just goes to show how local historiography sometimes starts and then proceeds.

[1] Who are the other historians?

[2] L. Départ, 'Mimizan. Notice historique', p. 230.

[3] Taking for his starting point Départ's article (as did Mussot-Goulard), J. Supéry simply makes the mottes around the *Lac d'Aureilhan* not be defensive sites constructed by the local populations against the Northmen but sites constructed by the Northmen themselves, starting in 840 of course, to protect their base there from local attacks, a base which became a veritable naval *chantier* and which continued its existence without interruption until 982 after the 'Battle of Taller' when the Northmen did not disappear from the region but simply morphed into *Cagots*. This creative thesis was first put forward in J. Supéry's *Le secret des Vikings* (Paris, 2005), at pp. 151-83, but has been repeated ever since in his many later writings culminating in his recent *La Saga des Vikings*, at for example pp. 183-87. I leave it to interested readers to judge for themselves the merits or otherwise of this whole idea.

From a chronological and geographical point of view given that we know that a group or some groups of Northmen were making raids in the Iberian Peninsula from 966 to *c*.971/72 but then left heading back north, a subsequent landing on the watery Gascon coast is quite possible to envisage or imagine. That William of Bordeaux had fought against them, been captured and ransomed before dying during a second engagement can be doubted from the slight and dubious 'evidence' we have but it is not absolutely impossible. In regard to the count of Gascony, William Sanche, the evidence for him inflicting a major defeat on the Northmen is so full of hagiographical and other *topoï*, and has many parallels with other earlier stories of counts called William in Aquitaine, and is as Charles Higounet rightly says mostly *littérature*, that we may wish to consign the stories to the dustbin of history as some historians have done, because there is no real certainty on the activity of the 'vikings' in Gascony in this period. On the other hand, and although with great hesitancy and with all the required caveats, I can indeed imagine such an incursion into Gascony and such a battle involving Count William Sanche and the Northmen who had been in Iberia until 972, perhaps sometime in the 970s although if such a battle took place it was in my opinion more likely somewhere near the coast of the Landes or Bordelais and likely not at or very near the present village of Taller near Castets, and furthermore there is no convincing evidence to date such a battle to the year 982.

Chapter 16

SWANSONG IN AQUITAINE: THE EARLY ELEVENTH CENTURY

This final chapter is an investigation of the last Scandinavian incursions into Aquitaine in the early eleventh century - what we may call the Northmen's swansong in the region.[1] It explores three primary pieces of evidence one at a time and sees what we may be able to make of them, before attempting any tentative synthesis or conclusions.

In regard to Aquitaine, Pascale Bourgain *et al.* write that these incursions were part of 'la seconde grande vague des invasions scandinaves, qui toucha surtout l'Angleterre, l'Irlande, les côtes de Frise et les ports du Rhin inférieur […] menace aussi les côtes du Poitou jusqu'au début du XIe siècle',[2] which is quite true but it does not take us very far.[3] More in regard to Iberia, Ann Christys rightly points out that in the eleventh century 'the locus of story-telling about Vikings in the South has shifted to Scandinavia and Ireland';[4] this is also true although the comment does to a certain extent ignore or perhaps just downplay the associated evidence of Ademar of Chabannes and William of Jumièges. The theme or dossier of the Northmen's activities in northern France/Brittany, in Aquitaine, and supposedly in Spain/Iberia during the first decades of the eleventh century would greatly benefit from a separate doctoral or other thesis on the whole subject.[5] What follows in this chapter is not this; it really only attempts to provide some pointers and to pose various questions whilst offering some initial and tentative interpretations.

First, two of Ademar of Chabannes's stories about one or more incursions into Aquitaine in the early eleventh century will be examined. Next, we will look at various skaldic verses composed in praise of Olaf Haraldsson (the future Saint Olaf of Norway), and third we explore two stories of William of Jumièges referring to two chieftains called Olaf and Lacman and their

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[1] The term swansong (*chant du cygne*) is borrowed from J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 99.
[2] *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain *et al.*, III, 44, p. 297.
[3] The only reference made here is to L. Musset, *Les invasions: le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne*, pp. 135-37, which itself does not help much. C. Etchingham says (pers. comm.): 'I would suggest that the Viking experience of Ireland, at any rate in the early eleventh century, cannot properly be described as part of a "vague des invasions scandinaves", since the external elements at Clontarf were there by invitation of the indigenous Vikings of Ireland or (in the case of the *mórmaer* of Mar in northeast Scotland) at the invitation of Brian Bóraime's regime.'
[4] A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, p. 95.
[5] Cf. S. Gillet, *Les activités des Vikings en Europe continentale après 911*, unpublished Master's dissertation (Université de Caen Normandie, 2017).

relationship with Duke Richard II of Normandy. After this some additional thoughts will be offered on the question of the abduction of Countess Emma of Limoges, and, finally, we will look at the possible connection of these raids in Aquitaine and the famous Battle of Clontarf in Ireland in April 1014. Along the way I will pose questions and suggest possible interpretations, some of which I may not ultimately plump for but which are worthy of consideration nonetheless. Many aspects of what follows have been looked at before by scholars, but as regards Aquitaine usually only very cursorily and also usually only in terms of one aspect.

At the end there is a brief summary and some tentative conclusions both on chronology and in regard to who was involved in these last incursions into Aquitaine, although many things still remain obscure. It is simply not possible to propose with any certainty an unambiguous linear narrative of these last incursions into Aquitaine. However, one thing that is very clear is that these last incursions into Aquitaine, brief though they seem to have been, have some very clear connections: with Denmark, with Norway, with England, with the Irish Sea region, and with Normandy, and they are thus prime examples of the theme of this thesis.

Two stories of Ademar of Chabannes

This investigation will start by looking at two stories told by Ademar of Chabannes written in the 1020s. In the first story we read:

> En ces jours, vers la fête des Apôtres et de saint Martial,[1] la vicomtesse de Limoges, Emma, [*vicecomitissa Lemovicae Emma*] alla prier à Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm et là elle fut capturée, de nuit, par les Normands qui la gardèrent trois ans au-delà des mers [*exul trans mare*]. Pour sa rançon, on versa un poids infini d'or et d'argent prélevé sur le trésor de Saint-Martial ainsi qu'une statue en or du saint archange et, d'autres riches ornements : les Normands prirent le tout, et, dans leur mauvaise foi, ils ne rendirent pas du tout la femme jusqu'à ce que Richard, comte de Rouen, longtemps après [*post multos dies*], pût habilement la racheter par des ambassadeurs envoyés outre-mer [*legatos ultramarinos*] et, libre, la rendre à Gui, son époux.[2]

Or in Elisabeth van Houts's English translation which I find not quite as good for our purposes:

[1] Ademar is clearly referring to the festival of the apostles Peter and Paul celebrated on 29 June and that of Saint Martial celebrated on 30 June.

[2] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 44, pp. 255-56. For the Latin see *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III, chap. 44; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, pp. 166-67; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 186-87.

> At that time, around the Festival of the Apostles and St Martial, Emma, viscountess of Angoulême [actually of Limoges: *vicecomitissa Lemovicae Emma*],[1] went to pray at the shrine of St Michel the Hermit and there, during the night she was taken captive by the Normans [= vikings] and detained for three years as an exile across the sea. Immense weights of silver and gold were offered from the treasury of Saint-Martial for her ransom as well as a gold statue of the saint [*sancti*] archangel and other precious ornaments, which the vikings carried off in false trust, for they did not return the woman, until after many days [*post multos dies*][2] Richard count of Rouen cleverly got hold of her through overseas embassies and returned her free to her husband Guy.[3]

According to the second story:

> En ce temps-là, une foule immense de Normands venus du Danemark et d'Irlande [= *ex Danamarca/Danamarcha et Iresca regione*] aborda Port-Aquitain [*appulerunt portum Aquitanicum*] avec une flotte innombrable. Et comme leurs ancêtres l'avaient fait, ils tentèrent de désoler et de réduire en captivité l'Aquitaine entière. Aussi le très valeureux duc Guillaume fit partout appel aux évêques pour engager le peuple à implorer le secours du Seigneur par des jeûnes et des litanies. Quant à lui, rassemblant une forte troupe de guerriers d'élite, il atteint le rivage de la mer, au mois d'août, à la tombée de la nuit, et établit son camp près des Normands. À la vue de la multitude des chrétiens, les païens,[4] frappés de terreur, passèrent toute la nuit à creuser de petites fosses tout autour, qu'ils recouvrirent de mottes de gazon pour y faire tomber les cavaliers non avertis. Au petit matin donc, sans précautions, l'armée, avec le duc chevauchant en première ligne, dans une charge effrénée des chevaux contre les païens, tombe bientôt dans les fosses. Les chevaux s'écroulent avec leurs cavaliers alourdis par le poids de leurs armes, et beaucoup sont faits prisonniers par les païens ; les derniers rangs de l'armée, prenant garde un peu

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[1] My insertion. Why van Houts translates this as 'viscountess of Angoulême' is unknown. Emma was the daughter of Ademar, viscount of Ségur, and Mélisende. For which see in the first instance R. Fage, 'La maison de Ségur, son origine, ses vicomtes', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique du Limousin* (1878), pp. 261-83, at p. 283; R. de Lasteyrie, *Étude sur les comtes et vicomtes de Limoges antérieurs à l'an Mil* (Paris, 1874), p. 84. The whole issue of the early viscounts of Limoges remains a lively issue in French historiography, but Guy was certainly a viscount of Limoges.

[2] My insertion. Whether *post multos dies* means 'after many days' or 'longtemps après' can be debated.

[3] E. van Houts, *The Normans in Europe* (Manchester and New York, 2000), p. 214.

[4] In terms of this mention of 'pagans, C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: 'It is very odd that any Irish Sea Vikings should be imagined to be pagans in the early eleventh century, when they had been Christian for perhaps three generations (or more). Is it not indicative merely of hostile rhetoric and stereotyping, rather than factual chronicling? The point is brought out by the reference you highlight below to Vikings *mixtim Christiani mixtim pagani*. But why should even Danes be automatically cast as pagan in the early eleventh century, when their kings were Christian since the conversion of Sveinn's father Haraldr *blátann* Gormsson, apparently sometime after 960?'

tard à la ruse, sautent de leurs montures. Le duc lui-même, abordant à cheval une fosse, s'effondre la tête la première, et, chargé du poids de ses armes, il allait tomber dans les mains de ses adversaires, si Dieu, qui le protège toujours, ne lui avait fourni la force et la présence d'esprit de sauter d'un grand élan, et de rejoindre les siens d'une course très rapide. Bientôt on arrêta le combat à cause des prisonniers, de crainte qu'ils ne fussent tués ; ils étaient en effet parmi les plus nobles. Ce jour se passa en hésitations dans les deux camps, et la nuit qui suivit, à la faveur de la pleine mer, les païens grimpent à toute allure sur leurs vaisseaux avec les captifs et s'échappent avec le secours de l'Océan : jamais plus ils n'inquiétèrent ces rivages. Le duc cependant envoya pour la rançon des captifs d'immenses quantités d'argent : pour chaque homme il paya son poids d'argent et, aussi, les racheta tous.[1]

Here we should also mention the so-called *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux*, which as was noted in the previous chapter finishes in 1182 but is only found in an abridged version written in 1570 'avec un degré d'altération de la source difficile à percevoir'.[2] This *Fragment* says for what concerns us here:

Post hunc in eadem sede successit Arnaldus Vittabrensis [Arnald of Vitabre/Villebois] Episcopus, & rexit Ecclesiam annos XXII. Obiit autem anno Domini millesimo trigesi.[3] sexto, II Ideus Julii, sepultusque in dicta Basilica; cujus tempore iterum Normanni portum Aquitanicum applicuerunt apud S. Michaëlem de Eremo volentes Aquitaniam desertare; contra quod Gloriosus Guilhermus Comes Pictavensis bellum commisit & maxima eorum pars mortua est. Huic bello Arnaldus Vittabernsis Episcopus interfuit, sed cum non haberet pecuniam, unde suos remuneraret milites pro eorum labore […].[4]

Which is summarily 'translated', but not so accurately, by Muriel Laharie as:

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, book 3, chap. 53, pp. 266-67. For the Latin text of Ademar's manuscript C (actually a combined text) see *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, III. chap. 53, p. 172; J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 203-4. For MS A see *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 176.
[2] Cf. F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30.
[3] *Trigesimo*.
[4] *Fragmentum de Petragoricensibus Episcopi*, ed. P. Labbe, *Novae Bibliothecae Manuscriptorum Libororum,* vol. 2 (1657), p. 737. The remainder of the sentence reads '… accepit quandam pecuniae summam ab Antoyno, sive ut alio Codice legitur, Antonio, Lemovicensi Episcopo super Archipresbyteratu Exindoliensi quod usque hodie propter Petragoricensis Ecclesiae negligentiam oblivioni traditum est & omissum.'

> Après Raoul de Couhé, vint Arnaud de Vitabre, qui occupa le siège épiscopal durent vingt-deux-ans. Il mourut l'an 1036, le deux des ides de juillet. Il fut enseveli à Saint-Front. De son temps, les Normands tentèrent une nouvelle invasion en Aquitaine, et débarquèrent près du monastère de Saint-Michel-de-l'Herm,[1] mais le comte de Poitiers leur fit la guerre et les tailla en pièces. Notre évêque prit part à cette expédition. Or il advint que l'argent lui manqua […].[2]

The author of the *Fragment* is mistaken in many places, particularly regarding chronology, but here he has clearly borrowed this story of the attempted invasion and battle directly from Ademar of Chabannes.[3] But what is of most interest here is that he says that the new bishop of Périgueux, Arnald (Arnaud in French) of Vitabre/Villebois, took part in the battle with Count William (V) of Poitiers (*Guilhermus Comes Pictavensis*).[4] Arnald became bishop of Périgueux either in 1011/1012,[5] or, possibly more likely, during Lent 1013.[6] So if Bishop Arnald really did take part in this battle it can only have taken place after this, and from the text as written maybe not long after he became bishop. If Ademar's dating of the battle to August is correct then we are probably looking at August 1013 or just after.

Another point is worth highlighting here. The story of Ademar (book 3, chap. 53) quoted above is the text found in MS C (and with minor differences in MS A).[7] The likely earliest manuscript 'H' (or *alpha* using Landes' terminology)[8] has various other things not found in MSS A or C. Regrettably, I cannot explore all these fascinating matters much here. I would just mention a couple of things. First, the H/*alpha* text has after the words 'appulerunt portum Aquitanicum' the information 'juxta Pictavorum terminos', meaning close to/near the frontiers/boundaries of Poitou.[9] As Jules Lair says: 'A et C ont supprimé « juxta Pictavorum

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[1] Laharie omits mention of *portum Aquitanicum*.

[2] M. Laharie, 'Évêques et société en Périgord du Xe au milieu du XIIe siècle', *Annales du Midi : revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale*, 94. 159 (1982), pp. 343-68, at p. 359.

[3] It is of interest to note that the author of the *Fragment* brings together Ademar's two stories, about Emma's abduction at Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm and the battle with William V, as do many modern historians, but which may or may not be correct.

[4] Notice that Laharie does not include William's name as the original Latin does.

[5] *Ibid*, p. 344, p. 345, nn. 3-8. See also *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 260, n. 435, where his installation as bishop is placed between 1010 and 1013.

[6] For which dating see A. Massoni, 'La fondation du chapitre de Saint-Astier et les débuts de la collégiale', *Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique du Périgord*, 142 (2015), pp. 55-76, at p. 57 and n. 16, p. 59 and n. 3.

[7] To use Chavanon's and Lair's lettering.

[8] This part of MS H/*alpha* can be found in J. Lair, *Études critiques*, pp. 203-5; *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, pp. 208-9; *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, pp. 12-13. The relationships between the manuscripts were discussed a little in the previous chapter.

[9] J. Martindale, 'Peace and war in eleventh-century Aquitaine', p. 171: 'At that time an infinite multitude of Norsemen from Denmark and the Irish region crossed the sea in a fleet too great to number. Confident in their arms they landed in this hostile multitude at an Aquitanian port close to the frontiers of Poitou […].' Here

terminos, » indication essentielle.'[1] Second, MS C says only 'Et, sicut parentes eorum egerant, conati sunt omnem Aquitaniam desertare et captivare', 'Et comme leurs ancêtres l'avaient fait, ils tentèrent de désoler et de réduire en captivité l'Aquitaine entière'; but the H/*alpha* text gives a fuller account:

> Et sicut antiqui parentes earum pagani, Aquitanica rura depopulati sunt, ita et isti mixtim Christiani mixtim pagani,[2] nostros vicos castella et civitates conati sunt flammis conburere et populum Christianum ferro diverberare et captivare, et ecclesias Dei et monasteria desertare.[3]

> And, just as their ancient ancestors had depopulated the countryside of Aquitaine, so again as a [force] of mixed pagans and Christians they tried to set fire to our villages, castles and cities, to exterminate or capture Christian people by the sword, and to lay waste God's churches and monasteries.[4]

There then follows a more detailed account of William's fight with these Northmen and the ransoms paid, with elements not found in texts C and A.[5] As Jules Lair pointed out this 'suppression' in the C and A texts is most remarkable. He says that the information in text H/*alpha* is the most characteristic. It denotes that the author of H/*alpha* was a 'chroniqueur observateur', whereas texts A and C show an 'abréviateur plus indifférent, vivant après des événements et n'y donnant plus le même intérêt'.[6]

Martindale is using the H/*alpha* MS which does have the words *mare transeuntes, armis confidentes et multitudine feroci hostium* before the words *appulerunt portum Aquitanicum*, not found in later versions.

[1] J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 204, n. 1.

[2] P. Bauduin (pers. comm.) says that if we are concerned here with 'vikings', which he says we must be, then the remark 'mixtim' is 'very interesting'. Essentially, and this is my point, who did Ademar think the Christianised Northmen were? C. Etchingham comments (pers. comm.): 'Pierre Bauduin's comment is apt, but my question would be […] why even Danish Vikings should be automatically supposed to be pagan in the early eleventh century, when leading elements in Norway and especially Denmark had already adopted Christianity at an official level.' To this Bauduin responds (pers. comm): 'Pour répondre à C. Etchingham, j'en dis quelques mots in « Richard II de Normandie : figure princière… » p. 59-60. En bref, Adémar ne dit presque rien de la conversion de la Scandinavie ; il indique que le père de Cnut était païen et que Cnut lui-même l'était encore lorsqu'il a conquis le royaume d'Angleterre, c'est plus tard, après son mariage avec Emma, qu'il se serait converti. Donc pour Adémar, la conversion des rois danois est très récente.'

[3] J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 204; R. Landes in *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, 'Annexe', p. 12.

[4] J. Martindale, 'Peace and war in eleventh-century Aquitaine', p. 171.

[5] See J. Martindale, 'Peace and war in eleventh-century Aquitaine', pp. 171-72 for an English translation and discussion of the fight. P. Bauduin (pers. comm.) says that this is 'intéressant car souvent C et A sont plus développées. Mais Adémar n'a cessé de corriger son texte, à mesure que son projet avançait ou qu'il avait de nouvelles sources ; ou bien qu'il cherchait à rendre son texte davantage crédible'.

[6] J. Lair, *Études critiques*, p. 206, n. 1. Of course, as was discussed in earlier chapters, due to the work of Landes and Bourgain we now better understand the composition of Ademar's *Chronicle*, rather than there having been a twelfth-century interpolator it is now believed that Ademar was continually changing and redacting his work and the different versions we have reflect the evolution of these redactions.

In regard to the dating of the two events told of by Ademar, French scholars have generally followed the lead of the Poitiers historian Alfred Richard and placed the abduction of the viscountess of Limoges Emma in 'about 1010'[1] and the more general incursion into Poitou/Aquitaine between 1003 and 1013, 'in the times of the Danish Sven Forkbeard', and even perhaps being connected with him.

In terms of Emma of Limoges's abduction, Richard says: 'A défaut de notes chronologiques fournies par le chroniqueur, on peut supposer, d'après la place que ce fait occupe dans la suite de son récit, qu'il se passa vers l'année 1010.'[2] Then, referring to the arrival at 'Port-Aquitain' and the fight with William V, he says: 'Comme dans le paragraphe précédent, le chroniqueur a parlé du pape Benoît VIII, qui régna de 1012 à 1024, et de Geoffroy, qui fut abbé de Saint-Martial de Limoges de 1008 à 1020, il ne semble pas que l'événement dont il est ici question puisse être mis après l'année 1020; nous inclinerons plutôt à placer l'épisode de la vicomtesse de Limoges et celui du comte de Poitiers sous le règne de Suénon I, roi de Danemark, qui, de 1003 à 1013, ne cessa de faire des expéditions maritimes contre l'Angleterre, auxquelles celles dirigées contre l'Aquitaine peuvent bien se rattacher.'[3]

Several other times have been proposed. Bernard Bachrach plumps for the specific year 1006;[4] Benjamin Hudson thinks these events all happened after the important Battle of Clontarf in Ireland in 1014 and places them in 1018.[5] One could also mention in passing Arthur de La Borderie's view that these events all happened before the year 1000, probably in the late 990s,[6]

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[1] See for instance recently P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes : autour du traité de 991', in A. Gautier and C. Martin (eds.), *Échanges, communications et réseaux dans le Haut Moyen Âge. Études offertes à Stéphane Lebecq* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 197-210, at p. 205.

[2] A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, I, p. 173, n. 1.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 174, n. 1.

[4] B. S. Bachrach, 'Toward a Reappraisal of William the Great, Duke of Aquitaine (995-1030)', *Journal of Medieval History*, 5. 1 (1979), pp. 11-21, at p. 13. In recent personal communications on the subject Bachrach says he cannot remember where this dating came from.

[5] B. T. Hudson, 'Knútr and Viking Dublin', *Scandinavian Studies*, 66. 3 (1994), pp. 319-35, at p. 321, says that the raid on 'St. Michel en l'Herm' happened in 'ca. 1018', claiming (at p. 321, n. 9) that the editor of Ademar (Jules Chavanon) places this in 1018 (referencing Chavanon's edition at p. 176, but see also p. 176, n. 1). He repeats this in his later *Viking Pirates* (at p. 68), also combining under the same date the abduction of Emma of Limoges and the general invasion of Aquitaine. Regarding the reference to Chavanon, this is quite true but in fact Chavanon gives no evidence at all for this dating, nor for his identification of Ademar's Port-Aquitaine with Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm. This quite spurious dating to 1018 (or 1017-1018) also crops up in many other later studies, including for example S. Duffy, *Brian Boru and the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2014), p. 226, although Duffy casts doubt on this. These and other datings to *c.*1018 ultimately do derive from Jules Chavanon although sometimes via the intermediary of Eleanor Searle's *Predatory Kinship*, or, much worse, from Michel Dillange's fanciful *Les comtes de Poitou: Ducs d'Aquitaine (778-1204)* (Mougon, 1995), p. 61. Hudson (*ibid.*, 'Knútr and Viking Dublin') continues: 'Adémar does not give his source of information, but it may have been from the court of Duke William of Aquitaine, whose contacts with the Vikings, and diplomatic exchanges with Knútr are well known'. For these contacts and exchanges between Cnut and William V see to start with G. Beech, 'England and Aquitaine in the century before the Norman Conquest', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 19 (1990), pp. 81-101.

[6] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 3, p. 3.

and even René Couffon's stimulating but ultimately, I fear, defective construction that it was after Olaf's stay on the Seine at Rouen over the winter of 1013-1014 that he set off with the intention of going to Jerusalem in the spring of 1014, but after having fought with William of Aquitaine later in 1014 he overwintered 'devant l'Espagne',[1] and in the summer of 1015 turned around and headed back north, although he did not return to Scandinavia till later.[2] More will be said on all these chronological questions as this chapter proceeds.

Regarding the term Port-Aquitaine (*portum Aquitanicam*) for the place where these innumerable Northmen arrived, this is perplexing. This *portus* is frequently identified with Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm or somewhere in its vicinity, but for no apparent reason that I can see other than Ademar of Chabannes's separate statement that Emma of Limoges was captured whilst praying at the monastery there.[3] Whilst not denying the vicinity of Saint-Michel-en-

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[1] Couffon seems to suggest that Olaf never got to 'Spain'. This is an idea I will return to.

[2] R. Couffon, 'Olaf Haraldson, Dol et Guérande', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Bretagne*, 29 (1949), pp. 24-33. If one accepts the usual opinion that Olaf was back in Scandinavia by 1015 this whole construction can be dismissed out of hand; however, Couffon makes a number of very excellent and pertinent points throughout his very dense work and it would be worth a fresh in-depth analysis. Supposedly following René Couffon, Claude Groud-Cordray, *In confinio Abrincatensis regionis : l'aristocratie des espaces frontaliers du IXe au milieu du XIIe siècle*, unpublished doctoral thesis (Université de Caen Normandie, 2019), available online: http://recherche.unicaen.fr/etudes-doctorales/soutenir-sa-these/, at p. 99, says: 'En 996, Olaf Lagman, roi des Hébrides et de l'Irlande, débarque près de Dol en répondant à l'appel du duc Richard de Normandie et défait en bataille l'avoué Salomon [without mentioning it this is clearly a reference to J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 99]. Après l'an mil, il n'y a plus que quelques Scandinaves gagés comme mercenaires, tel Olaf Haraldson engagé au service du duc de Normandie contre d'autres mercenaires retranchés dans la motte de Dol au printemps 1014. La saga d'Olaf, rédigée dans la première moitié du XIe siècle par le poète scandinave Sighvatr Thordarson, mentionne par ailleurs l'endroit où il livre bataille comme un fjord circulaire, aujourd'hui identifié à la baie du Mont-Saint-Michel.' Almost all Groud-Cordray's references here (for example at p. 99, nn. 643 and 644) are quite wrong, particularly regarding his references to the works of J.-C. Cassard and R. Couffon. Groud-Cordray adds (p. 99, n. 644): 'Ces dernières expéditions effectuées par des mercenaires relèvent cependant plus de la politique expansionniste du duc de Normandie et visent à affaiblir les défenses bretonnes autour du Mont Saint-Michel.' Although Groud-Cordray's whole thesis has much of great interest, here in particular his references to works of Michel Brand'Honneur and Stéphane Morin add nothing at all to our understanding. Were 'ces dernières expéditions effectuées par des mercenaires' in the early eleventh century (or even in the late tenth century) really manifestations of 'la politique expansionniste du duc de Normandie et visent à affaiblir les défenses bretonnes autour du Mont Saint-Michel'?

[3] One view in this direction is that of O. Jeanne-Rose, 'Ports, marchands et marchandises. Aspects économiques du littoral poitevin (IXe-XIIe siècles)', in D. Guillemet and J. Péret (eds.), *Les Sociétés littorales du Centre-Ouest atlantique de la Préhistoire à nos jours*, *Actes du colloque international de la mer, Rochefort, 18-20 avril 1995, Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest et des musées de Poitiers,* 5th series, vol. IV (1996), pp. 115-42, at p. 130, in which Jeanne-Rose opines that: 'Enfin, et surtout, à l'orée du XIe siècle, le *portus Aquitanicum*, Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm, subit l'attaque d'une importante flotte de pirates scandinaves venus d'Irlande et de Danemark.' No justification is given to identify the *portus Aquitanicum* with Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm. The only reference Jeanne-Rose gives here (p. 130, n. 2) is to L. Papy, *La côte atlantique de la Loire à la Gironde*, vol.1, *Les aspects naturels. Introduction à une étude de géographie humaine* (Bordeaux, 1941), p. 150, n. 79, saying, to use the words of Jeanne-Rose, 'Le port devait être de ces buttes coquillières, nombres près de Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm'. But he then adds very speculatively (p. 130): 'On peut supposer que les Normands n'entreprirent pareille et périlleuse expédition - ils furent repoussés par Guillaume le Grand, comte de Poitiers - que parce qu'ils estimaient pouvoir s'emparer d'un butin fructueux, de ceux génère le pillage d'un actif foyer économique. La prospérité de l'endroit, due à l'important centre de pèlerinage que constituait l'abbaye de Saint-Michel, leur était probablement connue par des contacts antérieurs'. He references here (p. 130, n. 3) Ademar's story of the abduction of Emma of Limoges 'au début du XIe siècle', suggesting thereby that this took place earlier in the century. He

l'Herm option, and indeed even mentioning it,[1] the latest editors of Ademar's *Chronicon*, Pascale Bourgain *et al.* - and here they are very much following André Debord's views on a supposed 'viking' base situated at or near Taillebourg on the river Charente from the mid-ninth century - suggest that the *portus* of Aquitaine could also mean Taillebourg 'où la construction d'un *castrum* ne remonte qu'aux années 1007.'[2] This is an idea I do not favour.[3]

Yet if these Northmen really had arrived in Lower Poitou somewhere in the extensive *Golfe des Pictons* in the vicinity of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm I tend to think this may have more likely been at nearby Luçon which would at this time, and earlier and later, had more claim to be an important Aquitanian *portus* than the small monastery of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm situated on a tiny island in the *Golfe des Pictons.*

Next, what about Viscount Guy of Limoges and his wife Emma? Guy of Limoges (c. 962-d. 1025) seems to have married Emma of Ségur at the end of the tenth century.[4] She died after her husband. This does not really help us at all to pin down the date of Emma's abduction and her subsequent captivity 'overseas'. There are, however, various *actes* or charters signed by both Guy and his wife Emma.[5] The majority of these cannot be dated more narrowly than to specific periods between roughly 996 and 1014, although later ones can be dated more definitely to 1019 and to 1025.[6] *Acte* number 8 however is particularly interesting for our purposes. This is dated by Vincent Roblin (following Richard Landes) to between 998 and 1007

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also references J.-L. Sarrazin, 'Le littoral poitevin (XIe-XIIIe siècles) : conquête et aménagement (première partie)', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 99. 1 (1992), pp. 13-31, at pp. 26-27, n. 6. Sarrazin (at p. 15) says: 'Certes, au début du XIe siècle, il n'est pas, au couchant, cette frange désertique que les invasions normandes auraient vidé de ses habitants,' see his earlier pages for the context he has in mind. Then, explaining this (at pp. 26-27, n. 6), Sarrazin says: 'Faisant suite à une longue période de calme relatif, les ultimes épisodes des invasions normandes, l'enlèvement de la vicomtesse de Limoges, Emma, en pèlerinage à Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm et le débarquement d'une troupe au port du même lieu [note!], au début du XIe siècle […] montrent, a contrario, que l'abbaye était redevenue un important centre de pèlerinage et *Portus Aquitanicum* un actif foyer économique. Les buttes huîtrières des Chauds près de Saint-Michel-en-1'Herm et de la route de l'Epoids à Beauvoir-sur-Mer, dont on a démontré l'origine anthropique, constitue un témoignage archéologique probant de l'importance de l'industrie ostréicole aux environs de l'an 1000.' I will leave the question of the *industrie ostréicole* here. For our purposes, however, all of this is highly suppositional. The abduction of Emma of Limoges is not definitely to be dated to earlier than the fight of William V, (although this is not impossible as I will discuss later), but more pertinently the identification of the *portus Aquitanicum* with Saint-Michel-en-1'Herm can be doubted.

[1] See P. Bourgain *et al.*, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, pp. 305-6, particularly regarding O. Jeanne-Rose's article referenced above. They also refer to A. Richard's dating of 1003-1013, with which they seem to agree.

[2] *Ibid*. The editors reference A. Debord, *La société laïque*, pp. 53-54, who argues here, quite wrongly in my opinion, for a very long-lasting 'viking' base at Taillebourg on the Charente. For a corrective to this see J. Chapelot, 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg'; *idem*, 'Aux origines des châteaux et des bourgs castraux dans la moyenne et basse Charente'.

[3] For the reasons given, amongst others, by J. Chapelot in 'Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg'.

[4] See for example D. Delhoume and C. Rémy, 'Le phénomène vicomtal en Limousin, IXe-XVe siècles,' in H. Débax (ed.), *Vicomtes et vicomtés dans l'Occident médiéval* (Toulouse, 2008), pp. 237-250, esp. p. 239.

[5] *Recueil des actes des vicomtes de Limoges (Xe-XIVe siècle)*, ed. V. Roblin (Geneva, 2009), pp. 99-119.

[6] *Ibid*., see the *actes* or charters numbered 10 to 12, pp. 110-114.

because of the presence of the abbot of Saint-Martial *Adalbaud* (998-1007).[1] In this charter Viscount Guy and his wife Emma give lands to the abbey of Saint-Martial at Limoges. Pierre Bauduin says, regarding this: 'L'acte 8, notamment, confirme les liens de Gui et Emma avec Saint-Martial de Limoges : Adémar dit clairement que l'abbaye avait contribué (sans succès) à la rançon d'Emma. L'acte ne fait pas allusion à la captivité d'Emma, ce qui serait sans doute le cas si le vicomte et son épouse avaient voulu remercier l'établissement par leurs donations, donc on peut suggérer que l'acte est antérieur à la capture d'Emma.'[2] Indeed so, but the fact that we cannot pin down the date of this charter other than to between 998 and 1007 makes it difficult to draw more specific conclusions, except I would suggest that it would seem to exclude Emma's abduction having taken place in the 990s as suggested for example by Arthur de La Borderie.

Turning now to Ademar's statement that Emma of Limoges had been taken at Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm and that her husband Guy had first gathered a ransom for his wife consisting of an infinite weight in gold and silver collected from the treasure of Saint-Martial of Limoges, plus 'une statue en or du saint archange' and other rich ornaments, but that in spite of which payment the Northmen had 'in bad faith' not returned Emma but instead schlepped her off for three years captivity 'overseas', this certainly suggests that the Northmen involved had perhaps stayed around in the area for a time whilst Guy collected this ransom together.[3]

Ademar says that Emma was kept three years in exile *trans mare* ('overseas' or 'au-delà de la mer'), and that it was only because of the eventual intervention of 'count' Richard (II) of Normandy who 'a long-time afterwards' sent ambassadors or legates 'overseas' (*ultramarinos*), yet again, to obtain her freedom and deliver her back to her husband Guy. A number of difficult geographical and chronological questions are begged by this. As has been mentioned many times earlier in the present thesis the term *trans mare*, *ultramarinos* and similar was almost invariably used in Frankish annals, chronicles, hagiographies, relic translations and charters to signify England.[4] If the same meaning is applicable here (and I can see no reason why it might not be), then if Emma had been captured prior to 1013, or perhaps even in *about* 1010 as suggested by Alfred Richard, then Richard II must have sent his ambassadors to England. If this is so the ambassadors Richard II of Normandy sent 'overseas' must have gone to the Dane

[1] *Ibid*., p. 108, and R. Landes, 'Autour d'Adémar de Chabannes : quelques précisions chronologiques au sujet du Limousin vers l'an mil', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique du Limousin*, 122 (1994), p. 47.
[2] Personal communication.
[3] Other interpretations are explored later.
[4] Or certainly to the British Isles including the Irish Sea zone, but when one considers all the many uses of this term, or similar, they do all seem to be referring to England. But we do have to admit the possibility that Duke Richard could have intervened elsewhere in the British Isles, even in the Irish Sea zone.

Swein Forkbeard, perhaps when Swein was in Yorkshire in late 1013 and before his death on 3 February 1014, or even to his son Cnut after he had returned to England in 1015. More will be said of this below particularly regarding the testimony of William of Jumièges regarding Swein's alliance, or better said treaty, with Richard II of Normandy, which could have been concluded in 1013.

Finally, Ademar has the Northmen who made an incursion into Aquitaine[1] and fought with William V of Poitiers/Aquitaine coming from 'Denmark' and 'the Irish region' (or even the Irish Sea region) (*ex Danamarca/Danamarcha et Iresca regione*).[2] This is most intriguing. Does it perhaps suggest a joint or composite fleet possibly arriving separately and joining forces, or maybe the two fleets remained separate?

But whatever the case, given that this incursion likely happened in Ademar's own lifetime and within his own memory I believe we must accept his testimony that those responsible had connections with the Irish region and with Denmark from wherever he originally got his information on all these events, maybe even from William V himself.

If the Dane Swein Forkbeard, or just some of his men, were involved in this attack on Aquitaine as proposed by Alfred Richard[3] this could certainly explain Ademar's 'from Denmark', but the 'Irish region' is a trickier issue because whilst Swein was heavily involved in England in the early 990s,[4] the early 1000s,[5] and in the early 1010s,[6] until his death in

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[1] Which given Ademar's general view of 'Aquitaine' most likely means in Poitou and nearby regions. See also the earlier comments regarding Ademar's early H/*alpha* text.

[2] Pierre Bauduin (pers. comm.) says that the expression *Iresca regione* merits note. He says: 'Pourquoi l'auteur n'utilise-t-il pas le mot classique Hibernia, ou encore Scotia ? Ne veut-il pas souligner qu'il s'agit d'une flotte dont une partie des éléments vient des régions situées sur le pourtour de la mer d'Irlande. Iresca est très rarement employé : Adhémar est la seule occurrence dans les MGH. Le mot a peut-être un sens particulier.' This could be right and it certainly accords with the analysis that is developed in this chapter. C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: 'Bauduin's comments […] are apt and, given the uniqueness of the usage in MGH, it is surely significant that it looks like a reflex of Old Norse forms such as *Írskr* (adjective) 'Irish' and *Írska* 'Irish language'. To me this is the one indicator of a kind of authenticity in Ademar's narrative and suggests derivation (direct or indirect) from an Old Norse source or - perhaps more likely in an earlier eleventh-century context - speaker.'

[3] Of course, as will be explored later, there are 'viking' chieftains other than Swein who could have been the interlocutor between the Aquitanians and Richard II.

[4] Swein was active in England in 994 although he may also have participated at the Battle of Maldon in 991. Then he went to the Isle of Man in 995 (see note below). It is generally thought that thereafter he went back to Denmark for the next few years leading up to the naval battle against Olaf Tryggvason at Svolder in the Baltic either in 999 or 1000.

[5] The *ASC* describes Swein's involvement in England between 1003 and 1005, but 'he could have taken command [in England] as early as 1000 or 1001' according to A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready. The Ill-Counselled King* (London and New York, 2003), p. 49. In 1005 he then left for Denmark and it seems possible he returned in 1006, an issue which we shall touch on more later.

[6] It has been suggested by M. K. Lawson that Swein may have been one of the chieftains who had received a tribute from the English in 1012, after which many of the conglomerate army dispersed, with Swein then heading for the Welsh coast, (see M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: England's Viking King* (Stroud, 2011), pp. 32-33), but this is debatable at best and I will not pursue the idea further here. But Swein was certainly back in 1013 when he initiated a major and successful invasion of England.

February 1014, the only time we can be reasonably sure that he was in the Irish Sea zone was in 995 when he harried the Isle of Man,[1] and to where he had doubtless come from England. There is a report in the Welsh *Annals Cambriae* that he was shipwrecked off the Welsh coast *s.a.* 1011 (maybe 1012?) but this is debatable.[2] At some intervals during the absences of any explicit mention of him by name in Insular records he returned to Denmark; we know particularly of his involvement at the naval battle of Svolder in the Baltic in either 999 or 1000, but it must be pointed out that the precise nature and chronology of Swein's movements to and fro between the British Isles and Scandinavia during this whole period cannot be pinned down with any certainty despite the valiant efforts of many historians, and thus these questions remain open to debate and to differing conclusions.[3] Yet our aim here is more limited: Could Swein or some of his fleet have ever made a major incursion into Aquitaine in the company of some 'Irish region' Northmen? It is not impossible, but acknowledging the difficulties in tracing all Swein's movements this could only really have happened in the few years after 995, a period during which, of course, most historians would have him being back in Denmark. Thus, for the moment at least, I tend to reject this scenario.

On the other hand, Ademar's 'from Denmark and the Irish region' may rather lead us to link these incursions with a young Olaf Haraldsson participating in a 'viking' expedition in 1012-1013 (as it will be argued) with 'Danes' emanating from England, and also with the 'Olaf' and the very definitely Isles-connected 'Lacman' of two of William of Jumièges's stories.

The foregoing exploration only gets us so far. Therefore, we need to explore the further evidence of William of Jumièges in his *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, and the question of Olaf

[1] Cf. *Annales Cambriae*, ed. Williams ab Ithel, p. 20; M. K. Lawson*, Cnut: England's Viking King*, p. 31; C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap. 12.4.
[2] See M. K. Lawson*, Cnut: England's Viking King*, p. 33.
[3] There is an enormous literature on Swein's life and his movements, often reaching very differing conclusions. See just as a 'taster' and only those works in English: I. Howard, *Swein Forkbeard's Invasions and the Danish Conquest of England, 991-1017* (Woodbridge, 2003); T. Bolton, *Cnut the Great* (New Haven and London, 2017); *idem*, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century* (Leiden/Boston, 2009); M. K. Lawson*, Cnut: England's Viking King*; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*; N. Lund, 'The armies of Swein Forkbeard and Cnut: "leding or lið?"'**,** *Anglo-Saxon England*, 15 (1986), pp. 105-18; *idem*, 'The Danish perspective', in D. Scragg (ed.), *The Battle of Maldon AD 991* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 114-142; *idem*, 'The Danish Empire and the End of the Viking Age', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 156-81; S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England, c. 790-1016', pp. 48-82; *idem*, 'The Declining Reputation of Æthelred the Unready', in D. Hill (ed.), *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 227-53; *idem,* 'A Tale of Two Kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready'*, Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, 36 (1986), pp. 195-217; *idem*, 'Swein Forkbeard', in M. Lapidge, J. Blair, and D. Scragg (eds.), *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 2001); *idem*, 'Æthelred II (c.966 x 1016)', in C. Matthew, B. Harrison, and L. Goldman (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

Haraldsson (the later Saint Olaf) as told of primarily in the verses of his skalds Sigvatr Þórðarson and Óttar the Black (Óttar *svarti*). Let us start with these skaldic verses.

Olaf Haraldsson's raids in skaldic verses and other histories

Before starting this section about skaldic verses, I would like to quote Niels Lund's statement: 'Skaldic poetry is often trusted too easily - no trained historian of today could be as innocent as Snorri Sturluson about the praise poems recited in front of and paid for by a ruler.'[1] In general I tend to agree with this sentiment, and in what follows I hope I will not be as 'innocent' as Snorri Sturluson. However, take it or leave it, such skaldic poetry is all we really have concerning Olaf Haraldsson's early 'viking' career, if we totally discard it all we would know precisely nothing of the later Saint Olaf. Keeping Lund's apposite admonition in mind I will proceed.

As we have just seen, examining Ademar of Chabannes's stories on their own, and even taking account of various charters of Count Guy of Limoges and his wife Emma, has not really much helped us to pin down the precise chronology of these Scandinavian attacks in Aquitaine to a period other than to sometime in the first or early second decade of the eleventh century. If we are to believe the later *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux* regarding Bishop Arnald/Arnaud of Périgueux's participation in William V's fight with the Northmen then this suggests a date of in or after 1012, but when exactly this happened remains uncertain.

It is only by an examination of the skald Sigvatr Þórðarson's editorially-named praise poem for Olaf Haraldsson (the later Saint Olaf) *Víkingarvísur* ('Viking Verses'), plus a couple of stanzas of another of Olaf's skalds, Óttarr the Black (Óttarr *svarti*), in his *Hǫfuðlausn* ('Head-ransom'), coupled with the more reliable evidence of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, that might help us to pin the dates down further.

Sigvatr initially composed his *Víkingarvísur* for his paying client Olaf Haraldsson at some point after Olaf had returned to Norway - which was by 1015 it seems.[2] The early stanzas of the poem have a young Olaf undertaking or perhaps just participating in 'viking' raids in the

[1] N. Lund, 'Cnut's Danish Kingdom', in A. R. Rumble (ed.), *The Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway* (Leicester, 1994), pp. 27-42, at p. 38.

[2] Scholarly opinion varies as to whether Sigtvatr initially composed his 'Viking Verses' immediately after Olaf's return to Norway in *c.*1015 or somewhat later. See S. Ghosh, *Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History; Problems and Perspectives* (Leiden, 2011), p. 59.

Baltic region.[1] After this he headed to England, whether or not this was via Frisia.[2] Then in Sigvatr's stanzas we find Olaf participating in various attacks in England on the English of King Æthelred.[3]

Because of the various very apparent concordances between these stanzas and the evidence contained in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* most historians tend to agree that these stanzas are describing Thorkell the Tall's raids and activities in England from his arrival in 1009 until 1012.[4] Their conclusion is that the young Olaf had accompanied Thorkell in England during this time, although of course Sigvatr has placed his client Olaf in the foreground with a leading or predominant role even though the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* makes no mention of him at all which is not really surprising given that such is the nature of skaldic verse, that is to heap praise on the client who is paying for it.

Then the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that in 1012 after a tax had been paid 'the raiding-army dispersed as widely as it had been gathered earlier',[5] but Thorkell himself remained in England with forty-five ships and took mercenary service with Æthelred.[6] Furthermore, and to anticipate our investigation a little, the historiographical consensus (if there really is one) is that

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[1] See the relative stanzas in J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur*', in D. Whaley (ed.), *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 1 (Turnhout, 2012). Online starting from: https://skaldic.abdn.ac.uk/db.php?id=1360&if=default&table=text. Or see C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', in U. Dronke, G. P. Helgadóttir, G. W. Weber and H. Bekker-Nielsen (eds.), *Specvlvm Norroenvm: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre* (Odense, 1981), pp. 106-22, at pp. 110-114.

[2] Sigvatr in his stanza regarding Olaf's 'fifth battle' in his *Víkingarvísur* says: 'Hneigir hlenna}, vannt it fimmta víg, grimmt hjǫlmum - hlýr þolðu hríð fyr hári Kinnlimasíðu -, þás herr reið ofan við rausn at skeiðum ræsis, enn lið hilmis gekk í gegn rekkum at gunni'. Or in Jesch's translation: '{Oppressor of thieves} [JUST RULER = Óláfr], you won the fifth battle, dangerous to helmets - the bows suffered a storm off high Kinnlimasíða -, when the army rode down magnificently to the ruler's warships and the leader's troop advanced against warriors in battle.' For which see J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 5', p. 540. The idea that Sigvatr's *Kinnlimasíða* means somewhere in Frisia goes back *at least* to Snorri Sturluson's own early thirteenth-century interpretation of this stanza in his *Heimskringla*. Snorri wrote: 'Then king Óláfr sailed south to Frísland and lay off Kinnlimasíða in biting weather. Then the king went ashore with his forces, and the men of the country rode down against them and fought with them.' (see *Heimskringla II: Óláfr Haraldsson (The Saint)* (London, 2014), trans. A. Finlay and A. Faulkes (London, 2014) [hereafter *Heimskringla II*], p. 9). Judith Jesch severely questions this location in Frisia: see J. Jesch, 'Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', in J. Adams and K. Holman (eds.), *Scandinavia and Europe 800-1350. Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 255-68, at pp. 260-61. In addition, the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* suggests *Kinnlimasíða* was in England; see in the first instance C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 114.

[3] Cf. J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 6-9'.

[4] See *ASC s.a.* 1009 to 1012; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready. The Ill-Counselled King* (London and New York, 2003), pp. 91-111; *eadem*, 'Thorkell the Tall and the bubble reputation: the vicissitudes of fame', in R. Lavelle and S. Roffey (eds.), *Danes in Wessex: the Scandinavian impact on Southern England, c. 800 - c. 1100* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 144-57; A. Campbell, ed. and trans, *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, Camden 3rd series, no. 72 (London, 1949) [hereafter *Encomium Emmae*], Appendix III, pp. 73-77; *idem*, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History', The Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies Delivered at University College London, 17 March 1970 (London, 1971), pp. 8-12; R. G. Poole, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History: Some Aspects of the Period 1009-1016', *Speculum*, 62. 2 (1987), pp. 265-98.

[5] *ASC* E *s.a.* 1012, ed and trans. Swanton, pp. 142-43.

[6] See *Encomium Emmae*, p. 74; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 111 and p. 212, n. 1.

after being involved in England with Thorkell from 1009 to 1012, Olaf left England as part of this 'dispersal' in 1012 to undertake raids in 'France and Spain',[1] but Olaf was back in Normandy in 1013 to assist Duke Richard II in his fight with Odo of Blois, was then baptised by Richard II's brother Archbishop Robert of Rouen; perhaps he then went to England in 1014 (possibly accompanying the briefly exiled King Æthelred),[2] but thereafter he was certainly back in Norway by 1015 at the latest.[3]

In Ann Williams's opinion 'Oláf *helgi*' was just another, probably quite minor, member and ally of Thorkell's very heterogeneous 'immense raiding army' in England. I completely agree with this view. But Williams adds that:

> Since his departure from England [in 1012], Oláf had been campaigning on the Continent, where his marauding had taken him from Brittany down to northern Spain and back via Poitou to Normandy.[4] By the winter of 1013, he was in the employ of Duke Richard II, and it was allegedly at this point that he received Christian baptism from Archbishop Robert of Rouen. The occasion of Oláf's engagement was Duke Richard's projected war with Odo of Chartres.[5] When this was abandoned, Oláf was at a loose end, and his services were once more available for hire. Precisely when he entered the service of Æthelred is unknown, but it was perhaps only after the first overtures had been made by the repentant English.[6] Nor is it clear how payment was to be made. Oláf had of course campaigned in England before and knew how rich the pickings were, but Æthelred's withdrawal from the kingdom was anything but hasty and he may have had sufficient silver with him for at least a down payment.[7]

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[1] See just for example *Encomium Emmae*, p. 77; R. Poole, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History', p. 272; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 126.

[2] This idea comes from one of Óttarr the Black's stanzas which we shall discuss more later.

[3] For which dating see, just for example, S. Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom: State Formation in Norway, c. 900-1350* (Copenhagen, 2010), p. 31; *idem*, 'King, and Saint: The Medieval Histories about St. Óláfr Haraldsson', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 109. 3 (2010), pp. 281-321, at p. 290ff.

[4] Williams's only evidence for this statement (*ibid*., p. 219, n. 82) is C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', pp. 118-22, plus mention of Olaf's 'Poitevin campaign' recorded by 'Óttar *svarti*'. She suggests that this 'may be the same as that described by Adémar of Chabannes'. Here she references only M. Strickland, 'Military technology and conquest: the anomaly of Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 19 (1997), pp. 33-82, at p. 379, n. 141. But actually, in English historiography, in 1949 Alistair Campbell had also clearly outlined and argued for this opinion; for the totality of his argument see his *Encomium Emmae*, Appendix III, pp. 73-82. This whole idea also has a long history in Scandinavian and French historiography which I will not explore more here.

[5] I much appreciate Williams's 'projected war' because as will be shown later it does seem that Olaf and Lacman never did fight for Richard II.

[6] This is a reference to events described in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle s.a.* 1014.

[7] A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 126-27.

In Ann Williams's opinion it was in early 1014 at Rouen that Olaf had met Æthelred: 'Nor had the king [Æthelred] been idle during his enforced exile. On his arrival at Rouen in the second week of January 1014, he had met with another member of the "immense raiding army", Thorkell's old ally Oláf *helgi*.'[1] More will be said about this below.

I have skipped over much excellent scholarship and debate on these English matters because our concern is with France, and particularly with Aquitaine.

After having left England, seemingly sometime after Easter 1012, Olaf (and likely other Northmen he may have previously been with in England with Thorkell the Tall) makes an attack in a place called *Hringsfjǫrðr* and took a place called *Hóll* which was held by 'vikings'. Sigvatr says:

> A decade, with a battle-wall blizzard
> in beautiful Hringsfjǫrðr,
> was completed; the company
> at the king's bidding went there.
> On Hóll a high building
> he had - vikings held it;
> they asked not afterwards any such luck - demolished.[2]

Or as Judith Jesch translates this:

> The ten was complete {with a driving storm {of the battle-wall}} [SHIELD > BATTLE] in beautiful Hringsfjǫrðr; the troop went there, as the ruler commanded. He had a high building on Hóll destroyed; the vikings owned it; they did not ask for such luck for themselves after that.[3]

This does perhaps more seem to capture Sigvatr's (supposedly) consistent numbering of Olaf's battles, and this one as number ten.

This place of Hóll is nowadays almost invariably equated with Dol-de-Bretagne as we will examine later on regarding a story of William of Jumièges about an attack on Dol by an Olaf and a Lacman. I would just say here that we can at least doubt this because Sigvatr mentions Hóll as being held by 'vikings' whereas William of Jumièges has Dol being held by an obvious

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 126. For the timing and circumstances of Æthelred's flight to Normandy see *ASC s.a.* 1014.
[2] *Heimskringla II*, p. 14.
[3] J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 10', p. 548. Regis Boyer's French translation in his *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 35, suggests exactly the same: it starts with 'Le dizaine [battle] fut atteinte [...]'. See also C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 118.

Breton guardian called Salomon,[1] and, perhaps even more importantly as we will see later, the attack on Dol happened one year or so after that on Hóll. The two reports are not referring to the same attack as has usually been assumed.

Wherever Hringsfjǫrðr and Hóll may have really been located, in France, in Brittany, or even perhaps still in southern England, Sigvatr's 'eleventh battle' runs in Jesch's translation as follows:

> Óláfr, you won the eleventh battle in Gríslupollr, where princes fell; young fir-tree [warrior], you came away [safely] from that assembly. I have heard that that battle, fought briskly before the town of Viljálmr (*bœ Viljalms*), the trustworthy jarl,[2] destroyed helmets; it is the least of lists to enumerate that.[3]

Other English translations give slightly different takes which tend to make the *jarl* clearly refer to William and not to Olaf. Take that of Finlay and Faulkes for example: 'Óleifr, you fought, young sapling, the eleventh fight, where princes fell; clear from that encounter you came, at Gríslupollar. I heard that in that battle, fought briskly by the town of Jarl Viljálmr the steadfast, destroyed were helmets - that story is told most quickly.'[4] Whilst Christine Fell has:

> Óláfr you fought the eleventh battle in Gríslupollar, there where princes fell, you came young from that assembly, warrior, I have heard of that battle, waged with vigour before the town of the trusty earl William, that they damaged helmets. The story is soon told.[5]

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[1] For a discussion of the difficult issue of whether 'vikings' here means some other Scandinavians or not see first Judith Jesch's general opinion: J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 6', p. 541, and notes, particularly n. 8; *eadem*, 'Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 262: 'the word *vikingr* has no national or regional implications of any sort, and […], in skaldic poetry at least, its most common use is pejorative […] it tends to be used of the enemies of the king being praised in that poetry, regardless of their nationality'; *eadem*, *Ships and Men in the Late Viking Age: The Vocabulary of Runic Inscriptions and Skaldic Verse* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 44-56, where (at p. 49) she says that in skaldic verse *vikingr* 'is a pejorative term applied to one's opponent and would not normally be used of oneself or one's own group.' Regarding the general consensus that Sigvatr's Hóll and William of Jumièges's Dol were the same place, Jesch ('Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 262) notes that 'the similarity between Hól and Dol would […] not be sufficient for this assumption.' But then, perhaps a little circular because the mention of Dol comes from William's story of Olaf and Lacman, she then says by way of support for the equation of the two places that 'we do have some important evidence from William of Jumièges'. She then summarises the story, but then she references E. van Houts's opinion (*GND*, pp. 24-25) that 'William has here confused two events, the invasion of Brittany in 1009 and Olaf's visit to Normandy in 1013/14', to which we return below. Her conclusion is that ultimately 'there is nothing in Sighvatr's stanza to prevent the identification of Hól with Dol […], although the name is still a problem.'

[2] Apparently here Olaf Haraldsson.

[3] J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 11', p. 549: 'Ôleifr, vannt ellipta styr í Gríslupolli, þars jǫfrar fellu; ungr þollr, komt af því þingi. Frák þat víg, háit snarla fyr bœ Viljalms, tryggs jarls, at víttu hjalma; minnst tala es telja þat.'

[4] *Heimskringla II*, p. 14.

[5] C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 119. See also R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 35.

It is of interest how Snorri Sturluson so much later interpreted this. Snorri wrote: 'King Óláfr led his force westwards to Gríslupollar and fought there with vikings off Viljálmsbœr. There King Óláfr was victorious.'[1] Fell says the only thing Snorri has really added is that Óláfr 'led his force westwards to Gríslupollar'.[2] Yet actually (and similar to the 'vikings' Sigvatr said held Hóll) he also says that Óláfr fought with 'vikings off Viljálmsbœr', and that he was 'victorious', neither of which is in fact said in Sigvatr's stanza. Who did Snorri imagine these (probably Scandinavian) 'vikings off Viljálmsbœr' were whom Olaf fought and defeated?

All this is of importance because although we still really do not know where *Gríslupollar* actually was,[3] the 'town of William' is in my opinion almost certainly referring to William V ('The Great') of Poitiers/Aquitaine as discussed in the story told by Ademar of Chabannes which was outlined earlier. Was 'the town of Viljálmr' in fact Poitiers or another of his towns or fortifications in Poitou? If so then *Gríslupollar* could have been in northern Aquitaine along the coasts of Poitou, perhaps even somewhere in the *Golfe des Pictons*.[4]

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[1] *Heimskringla II*, p. 14. See also R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 35: 'La roi Óláfr mena sa troupe vers l'ouest jusqu'à Gríslupollar et se battit là contre des vikings devant Vijálmsboer. Il y remporta la victoire.' See also *Fagrskinna*, an immediate source for Snorri's *Heimskringla* and the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr*, both quoted and referenced in C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 119.

[2] C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 119.

[3] J. Jesch, 'Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 263, says, after admitting that *Viljálmsbœr* was probably in Aquitaine rather than in Spain, that 'we are still left with the problem of identifying *Gríslupollar*'. Regarding the word itself she says, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 11', p. 549, n. 3: 'The frequent variants in *Gísl-* must be influenced by the frequency of ON personal names with this element. The second element appears to be either dat. sg. *polli* or dat. pl. *pollum* 'pool(s)'; the pl. form is used in the preceding prose in *Hkr* and *ÓH*. *Polli* in papp18^{x} may suggest that its exemplar K had a dat. sg. form like some other mss, and that is chosen here. The variant *polla* in K^{x} would be acc. pl., implying a different understanding of the syntax.' Online: https://skaldic.abdn.ac.uk/db.php?id=3838&if=default&table=verses&val=reykholt. I have had some recent correspondence with Russell Poole on this linguistic matter. I initially floated the idea that the ON 'Gris' part might perhaps mean pig or wild boar as found in my own Cumbrian family name of Grisdale. Poole replied: 'Interesting! This name in Sigvatr is very difficult and obscure and the problem hasn't been definitively solved. The first two syllables of the name are not bound by internal rhyme or alliteration and therefore could represent blundered forms. I would, however, in the absence of anything better, stay with what Jesch states in her edition for SkP [as quoted above]. A fatal difficulty for your hypothesis, in my opinion, is the -lu- syllable. That precludes derivation from grís "(young) pig". On my querying why the 'lu' syllable excludes the Gris/pig idea, Poole answered: 'Yes I should have explained. The syllable -lu- is not meaningful in itself, just part of a word formation. But it can't form any case of grís (the inflections associated with this word being -s, -ar, -i, -a, -um). Also, while grís has derivatives, they are on the lines of grísungr, which doesn't help in this connection. In principle, each stanza of Víkingarvísur recounts a different battle but the Spanish part of the sequence is highly obscure. If anyone can anchor any of these stanzas to battles recorded elsewhere, you're probably the person'. I thank Russell Poole for this confidence but I am not sure I can (nor do I really try), except to say that I think that there is a good possibility that *Gríslupollar* was not actually in 'Spain' at all but rather in coastal 'Poitevin' Aquitaine. For an independent take on the 'pig' idea see H. Pires, 'Nem Tui, nem Gibraltar: Óláfr Haraldsson e a Península Ibérica', *España Medieval*, 38 (2015), pp. 313-28, at p. 319, a truly excellent work we shall refer to more soon.

[4] R. Keyser and C. R. Unger in their 1849 edition and commentary on the so-called *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* compare this saga with *Fagrskinna*, Sigvatr's and Óttarr the Black's stanzas, Snorri's own interpretations in *Heimskringla* and several other texts. Overall, they place such places as *Gríslupollar*, *Fetlafjǫrðr* and even the reference to *jarl* William (and implicitly also *Seljupollar* and *Gunnvaldsborg*), although the spellings of these places in the *Legendary Saga* are slightly different, in western France ('*vestlige Frankrige*'), and regarding the story of *Karlsár* (see below) they see this place as being in south-western France ('*sydvestlige Frankrige*'). Hence, they seem to suggest that all these places were in Aquitaine. See R. Keyser and C. R. Unger, eds. *Olafs saga hins*

In 1892 the Danish historian Adam Kristoffer Fabricius suggested that *Gríslupollar* may perhaps be identified with Castropol on the northern coast of Asturias,[1] and that, to use Christine Fell's words, 'Viljálmsbœ [*Viljálms fyr bœ*][2] may be a corruption of the place-name Villameá',[3] which lies about 30 kms up the river Eo from Castropol in Galicia,[4] south west of Lugo, 'and a hypothetical "William" [was] invented from the place-name',[5] or, to use Judith Jesch's words, an 'otherwise unknown ruler of the place has been extrapolated from its name'.[6] This view has been taken up by others since,[7] although it should be noted that this localisation, here as elsewhere, goes back to Adam Fabricius. I find this idea literally incredible. Regardless of where *Gríslupollar* really was, the idea that the town or *bourg* of William is a corruption of the modern place-name Vilameá in Galicia or an extrapolation of the name seems to be just grasping at some very vague straws.

My opinion that we should probably connect Ademar's story of Aquitaine being invaded and William V of Poitiers/Aquitaine confronting the Northmen with Sigvatr's stanza 11 is not in itself original, with various nuances and with greater or lesser precision and argumentation it has been proposed over the years by numerous eminent historians. I mention here just Caen's own Michel de Boüard, Ann Williams, Elisabeth van Houts, Judith Jesch and others.[8]

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helga (Christiana/Oslo, 1849), p. 103. In his 1868 edition of *Heimskringla* C. R. Unger also identified *Gríslupollar* and *Viljálmsbœr* as being places in France, as he does as well with all the other toponyms/locales in Sigvatr's relevant verses: See C. R. Unger, ed. *Heimskringla eller Norges kongesagaer af Snorre Sturlassøn* (Kristiana/Oslo, 1868), in 'Register over Stedsnavne'. Regarding Snorri's *Karlsár*, Unger would tentatively place this on the Garonne, so possibly at Bordeaux or somewhere further inland? Following Adam Kristoffer Fabricius's lead (A. K. Fabricius, *Connaissance de la péninsule espagnole par les hommes du Nord, Mémoire destiné à la 10eme session du congrès international des orientalistes* (Lisbon, 1892), pp. 5-6), there is a whole strand in Iberian historiography which would actually make *Hringsfjǫrðr* the Bay of Biscay and *Hóll* probably Bayonne, for which see most recently E. Morales Romero, *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la Peninsula Ibérica en los los siglos IX-XI* (Madrid, 2004), p. 202.

[1] A. K. Fabricius, *Connaissance de la péninsule espagnole par les hommes du Nord*, p. 6, followed, just for example, by O. A. Johnsen, *Olav Haraldssons ungdom indtil slaget ved Nesjar* (Kristiania/Oslo, 1916), p. 16. I would mention, however, that Fabricius's 1892 article in French is really just a translation of a part of his *Forbindelserne mellem Norden og den spanske halvø i ældre tider* (Copenhagen, 1882), pp. 96-102; but certainly, in Iberia at least, his 1892 French version has been more influential.

[2] *bœ Viljálms* literally means the town or *bourg* of William.

[3] C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 119. The present place in Galicia is called Vilameá.

[4] *Ibid*. In fact Vilameá does not lie on the River Eo but on the Rio Pequeno (a very minor river as its name suggests), but the Rio Pequeno does flow into the Eo.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 11', p. 549. n. 6: '*bœ Viljalms* "the town of Viljálmr": Snorri interprets this as a p. n. (…) and Fell (…) has suggested that this is 'a corruption' of the p. n. Villameá in Galicia, some 30 kilometres up the Río Eo from Castropol, and that the otherwise unknown ruler of the place has been extrapolated from its name. The place names in the Spanish section of the poem are all uncertain'. See also J. Jesch, 'Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 263.

[7] For example by R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 276, who notes 'Viljálmsbaer serait Villamea dans le nord de l'Espagne'. But he adds (*ibid*.), without any comment at all, 'On notera que Guillaume V d'Aquitaine (990-1030) se battit contre les Vikings dans le Poitou'. Indeed.

[8] M de Boüard, '*Commentaire Historique*', in R. Louis and M. de Boüard, 'La Normandie Ducale à travers l'œuvre de Wace (IV) : Olaf de Norvège en Normandie', *Supplément aux Annales de Normandie*, 2. 2 (1952), pp. 17-26,

Whatever the case may have been, Sigvatr then goes on in stanzas 12 and 13 to tell of a fight in *Fetlafjǫrðr*,[1] after which Olaf went 'south' to *Seljupollar* and then went up to 'old' *Gunnvaldsborg* where the 'jarl' *Geirfiðr* was captured.[2] These places are nowadays almost invariably identified as being in northern Spain/Iberia, whether or not *Fetlafjǫrðr* means *Flavium Brigantium*, now Betanzos south-east of A Coruña in Galicia,[3] *Seljupollar* means *Cilenorum aqua*, now A Guardia at the mouth of the river Miño, also in Galicia,[4] all of which were originally proposed by A. K. Fabricius,[5] and wherever *Gunnvaldsborg* might have been.[6]

Snorri Snurluson later added or interpolated a very dubious story saying that Olaf then led his troop towards the 'west' to Karlsár, a place sometimes imagined to be Cádiz:[7]

> After that King Óláfr led his force westwards to Karlsár and laid waste there, holding a battle there. And while King Óláfr was lying in Karlsár and waiting for a fair wind and

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at pp. 24-26; *idem*, 'Richard II (996-1027). Le raid d'Olaf Haraldsson sur les côtes de la Manche et de l'Atlantique (1013-1015)', *L'histoire locale à l'école*, in *Supplément aux Annales de Normandie*, 5. 1 (1955), pp. 1-5, at p. 2 and n. 7; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 126; E. van Houts, 'Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century', pp. 118-19; J. Jesch, 'Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 263. One could even add to this list R. Couffon, 'Olaf Haraldson, Dol et Guérande', although with some debatable chronology.

[1] See J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 12', p. 551: '{Tírfylgjandi} rauð tǫnn ylgjar tolfta sinni í Fetlafirði; {fjǫrbann} varð lagit mǫnnum'; '{The glory-follower} [WARRIOR] reddened the tooth of the she-wolf for the twelfth time in Fetlafjǫrðr; {a life-ban} [DEATH] was imposed on men'; *Heimskringla II*, p. 14; R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 35.

[2] See J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 13', p. 551: '{Snjallr dróttinn Þrœnda} vann þrettanda kunnan styr sunnarla í Seljupollum; þat vas bǫl flótta. Gramr lét gǫrva gengit upp í gamla Gunnvaldsborg of morgin, jarl of fenginn; Geirfiðr hét sá', '{The brave lord of the Þrœndir} [NORWEGIAN KING = Óláfr] won the thirteenth renowned battle south in Seljupollar; that was bad luck to those who fled. The prince had the whole troop go up to old Gunnvaldsborg in the morning, [and had] the jarl captured; he was called Geirfiðr'; C. Fell, 'Víkingarvísur', pp. 120-21; *Heimskringla II*, p. 15; R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 36.

[3] As suggested for example by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson: 'Óláfs saga helga', in *Heimskringla*, ed. B. Aðalbjarnarson, Íslenzk fornrit, 27 (1979, Reykjavík), but this is an idea that also goes back to A. K. Fabricius.

[4] As suggested for example by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson: 'Óláfs saga helga', pp. 6-7, followed, among others, by R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 276, but this too is an idea that goes back to Fabricius.

[5] A. K. Fabricius, *Connaissance de la péninsule espagnole par les hommes du Nord*, p. 6.

[6] C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísur*', p. 121 says: '*Gunnvalds borg* [*sic*] and *Geirfiðr* are otherwise unknown.' This is quite correct. Nevertheless, Snorri later introduces his own interpretation and says, immediately before quoting Sigvatr's stanza, that: 'From there [meaning from *Fetlafjǫrðr*] King Óláfr travelled all the way south to Seljupollar and had a battle there. There he won the city that was called Gunnvaldsborg - it was large and ancient - and there he captured a jarl who was in charge of the city called Geirfiðr. Then King Óláfr held a parley with the citizens. He imposed a ransom on the town and on the jarl for his release, twelve thousand gold shillings. The amount of money he imposed was paid to him by the city': see *Heimskringla II*, pp. 14-15. For the very similar French translation of this see R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, pp. 35-36. J. Jesch, 'Vikings on the European Continent', p. 263, n. 38, says, after mentioning Sigvatr's story of 'Grislupollar': 'The remaining stanzas of the poem contain several more place-names in France and Spain. Space does not permit further discussion of these here; I have some brief comments in my *Ships and Men*, pp. 84, 85, but more work is needed on the identifications.'

[7] A. K. Fabricius, *Connaissance de la péninsule espagnole par les hommes du Nord*, p. 5; many others have followed his lead since. Why would *Karlsár*, which is quite obviously, in my opinion, a reference to a place (or likely river or estuary) associated with a 'Charles', have anything to do with Cádiz or sometimes the mouth of the Guadalquivir? There is no Carolingian or immediately post-Carolingian source which relates Cádiz with any Charles. See the earlier note regarding Keyser and Unger's 1849 interpretation, and also Unger in his 1868 edition of *Heimskringla*.

> planning to sail out to Nǫrvasund and from there out to Jerusalem, then he dreamed a remarkable dream, that there came to him a remarkable and handsome and yet terrifying man and spoke to him, telling him to abandon that plan, of going to distant lands. 'Go back to your ancestral lands, for you will be king over Norway forever.' He understood this dream to mean that he and his kinsmen would be king over the land for a long time.[1]

In my opinion we should discard most of this story particularly as it concerns a planned trip to Jerusalem via *Norvasunda*, and, of course, the classic dream element.[2] Once we remove all this imaginative part all we are really left with is a reference to a place called *Karlsár*, about the location of which I tend to agree with Keyser and Unger's interpretation that this more probably means it was somewhere in 'south-western France' rather than in southern Iberia.[3]

Continuing with the same theme, as has already been noted all these tentative identifications of all or most of the places named in stanzas 11, 12 and 13 of Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* being in Spain/Iberia are based in the first instance on Fabricius's views, and, usually following his lead, on the opinions of many later Scandinavian and Iberian scholars, even though the only source which explicitly mentions a trip of Olaf's to Spain is the late *Historia Norvegiae*, which will be touched on more later. But we should severely question all this because there is a major chronological issue.

Regarding Olaf Haraldsson's early 'viking' career the prevailing historiographical consensus, if there really is one, is that expounded by Alistair Campbell, followed amongst others by Russell Poole,[4] notably that after being involved in England with Thorkell the Tall from 1009 to 1012 Olaf left England in about 1012 to undertake his raids in 'France and Spain', but that he was in Normandy in (say) 1013 to assist Richard II in his fight with Odo of Blois, was there baptised by Richard's brother Robert archbishop of Rouen, perhaps then went briefly

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[1] *Heimskringla II*, p. 15.

[2] It bears many of the same hallmarks as other sagas of later travellers to the Holy Land such as that of *Sigurðr Jórsalafari* and that of Rögnvaldr of Orkney, and even I suggest of the tale told in the so-called *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* about a trip made by two sons of a Ragnall (ON Rögnvaldr), from the Orkneys via England and France to Iberia and then into the Mediterranean, which I intend to argue in the future has often quite wrongly been linked to the second Scandinavian expedition to Iberia and the Mediterranean between 858/59 and 861; for which see *FAI* § 330, ed. and trans. J. Radner, pp. 118-121.

[3] For the corresponding and rather different part of the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* see R. Keyser and C. R. Unger, eds. *Olafs saga hins helga*, pp. 11-13. For this locational view (France not southern Iberia) see also H. Pires, 'Nem Tui, nem Gibraltar: Óláfr Haraldsson e a Península Ibérica', pp. 323-24.

[4] *Encomium Emmae*, Appendix III, pp. 73-77; R. G. Poole, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History: Some Aspects of the Period 1009-1016', pp. 268-69; but before them see O. A. Johnsen, *Olav Haraldssons ungdom indtil slaget ved Nesjar* (Christiania/Oslo, 1916), itself based on Fabricius.

again to England in 1014 (possibly with King Æthelred),[1] but thereafter he went quickly back to Norway which he reached by 1015 at the latest.

Yet when we look at the historical record as we have it the only raids anywhere in the Iberian Peninsula in this general period that we can reasonably be assured of took place in 1015-1016, and indeed in what is now northern Portugal between the rivers Douro and Ave.[2] There is a clear chronological contradiction here because Olaf Haraldsson was apparently back in Norway by 1015 at the latest so he could not possibly have participated in these raids.[3] Thus, we either have to shift Olaf's supposed raiding into Iberia to a different (and earlier?) date, which would be difficult to do, or we must doubt that Olaf ever went to Spain/Iberia at all. I will return to this point later.

Of course, this does not completely exclude the possibility that there were some raids into Iberia in the period 1012-1013 but there is no surviving evidence for this and it is thus an idea we of necessity have to just assume if we want to interpret Sigvatr's relevant stanzas as supporting attacks by Olaf in this region at this time. On the other hand, and more interestingly perhaps for the purposes of Aquitaine, based on our previous examination of Ademar of Chabannes's evidence or 'dossier' the Scandinavian attacks in Aquitaine, or at least some of them, probably did happen roughly during this period.

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[1] The idea that King Æthelred had returned to England with Olaf in 1014 is discussed more later on.

[2] For which see *inter alia*: A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 96-100; H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147*), pp. 170-77; *idem*, 'De norte para sul: Os Vikings em Portugal', in M. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim*, pp. 111-22, at pp. 117-19; R. Pinto de Azevedo, 'A expedição de Almançor a Santiago de Compostela em 997 e a de piratas normandos à Galiza em 1015-1016', *Revista Portuguesa de História*, 14 (Coimbra, 1974), pp. 73-93, at pp. 85-88; A. C. Ferreira da Silva, 'Incursão normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim: O espírito do tempo e do lugar', in M. Barroca and A. C. Ferreira da Silva (eds.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim*, pp. 127-42, at p. 128. There is some very slight, suspect and ultimately unreliable evidence that just maybe there were some Northmen active in northern Spain in around 1008, for which see in the first instance H. Pires, *Incursões Nórdicas no Ocidente Ibérico (844-1147*), pp. 168-70.

[3] The attested raids into northern Portugal in 1015-16 do rather beg the question of who the Northmen responsible for these were, and where they had come from. I will unfortunately not be able to assess this question in detail here. If I may be allowed to speculate a little, one possible scenario is that the 'Danes' who had dispersed from England in 1012, (and who were probably accompanied by a young Olaf Haraldsson), had separated after raiding in Aquitaine. Olaf took his flotilla to Normandy but the others (or some of them) perhaps headed further south to make the raids in 1015-16? This is just an idea for future thought, but if one does not like this idea then I think one has to fall back on the rather imaginary idea that there was a 'permanent' or long-term 'viking' settlement in Gascony (in Bayonne even), or on the river Gernika-Mundaka on the Spanish 'Basque' coast, as espoused for example by Eduardo Morales Romero: see E. Morales Romero, *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos y musulmanes de la Peninsula Ibérica en los siglos IX-XI*, 2nd edn (Madrid, 2006), pp. 202-4. On this point Hélio Pires (pers. comm.) says: 'I see no reason why the attacks in northwest Iberia in 1015-16 wouldn't be [have been] carried out by a splinter group that may have partially accompanied Olaf Haraldsson's raids north of the Pyrenees. The fluidity which often characterised viking bands certainly allows for it and, given the chronological proximity, one must wonder how the conquering expeditions of Svein and Knut in England might have impacted on the dynamics of Norse marauding in western Europe, namely by joining, dispersing or enticing existing or new groups.'

Coupled with this, and as will be discussed more later regarding William of Jumièges's stories, if Olaf Haraldsson's participation in raids to the 'south' after leaving England in *c.*1012 had finished by the time he purportedly went to Rouen in the summer or autumn of 1013, and before he was back in Norway by 1015, we should at least question whether the unidentified places mentioned in Sigvatr's stanzas 12 and 13 were actually in Spain or Iberia or not. Given the very limited time window for all these attacks might we not perhaps even look for these places, or at least some of them, somewhere along the Aquitanian coast or, being more general, the Bay of Biscay acknowledging that the 'Bay of Biscay' certainly extends to places in Christian north-western Spain?[1]

Moving on, Snorri's very doubtful early thirteenth-century interpretation in his *Heimskringla* was mentioned above as was that found in the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr*. But the one place where we do find any mention of Olaf going to 'localities in Spain' in any other Norwegian or Icelandic literature of the twelfth or thirteenth centuries is in the *Historia Norwegiae*. In a very garbled and seemingly highly chronologically confused section regarding Olaf Haraldsson the author of the *Historia Norwegiae* tells us that apparently after the death of Swein Forkbeard (at the beginning of February 1014), and even after the death of King Æthelred (in April 1016): 'Meanwhile Olav defeated the Bretons, and pushing right on to localities in Spain ('Olauus interim Britones debellat et usque Hispanie partes ...'), left behind a celebrated name for his conquests.'[2] It would be interesting to know where the author got this information regardless of the erroneous chronology he places it in. It appears that because of his mention that Olaf 'left behind a celebrated name for his [these] conquests' he took this directly or indirectly from Sigvatr's verses.[3] This story by the author of the *Historia Norwegiae* is chronologically

[1] Prior to Fabricius's 1882 and 1892 publications the prevailing orthodoxy was in fact that *all* the raids involving Olaf mentioned in Sigvatr's verses after he left England were along the coasts of France. Without repeating the views of Unger, we must first mention the Norwegian historian Peter Andreas Munch who in the mid-nineteenth century wrote a most thorough and learned piece on Olaf's 'viking' raids in which he unusually brings together and assesses all the evidence, not only from skaldic verses and later sagas but also from William of Jumièges and Ademar of Chabannes. Although I might not agree with every part of Munch's analysis his view was that all of Olaf's raids happened in Brittany and in Poitou and did not reach Iberia is, to my mind at least, very coherent and rather convincing, for which see P. A. Munch, 'Olaf Haraldssøns Vikingetog', in *Det norske folks historie*, vol. 4 (Christiana, 1852-1863), reedition 1945, vol 4, pp. 41-52.
This is available online at http://runeberg.org/detnorsk/4/0049.html. For other early views to this effect see the references given by Fabricius.

[2] *Historia Norwegie,* eds. I. Ekrem and L. B. Mortensen, trans. P. Fisher (Copenhagen, 2003), pp. 100-3. See also *A History of Norway and the Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*, ed. with introduction and notes by C. Phelpstead, trans. D. Kunin, *Viking Society for Northern Research*, 13 (London, 2001), pp. 23-24.

[3] For a thorough discussion of the tricky and still debated question of the dating of the *Historia Norwegiae* and of the interrelationships between it, other Norwegian synoptics, the Icelandic *compendia* (including Snorri's *Heimskringla*), skaldic verses, and also Adam of Bremen, see C. Phelpstead, 'Introduction', in *A History of Norway,* pp. ix-xlv; and also the 'Introduction' and 'Essay' in *Historia Norwegie,* eds. I. Ekrem and L. Boje Mortensen, at pp. 8-48 and pp. 155-225; and, in general, S. Ghosh, *Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History.*

impossible, but even so it is perhaps still an 'early' (in the Norwegian sense) interpretation of Sigvatr's *Hringsfjǫrðr* and *Hóll* as meaning in Brittany and some of the later places being 'localities in Spain'.

It has been contended that the thirteenth-century Icelandic *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* shows many similarities with the early parts of the *Historia Norwegiae* regarding Olaf's early life and his 'viking' career. In addition, as the *Legendary saga* is generally taken to most closely reflect the contents of the now mostly lost and so-called *Oldest Saga of St Óláfr*, it has been suggested that the author of the *Historia Norwegiae* may also have had access to this earlier *Oldest Saga of St Óláfr* which is generally believed to have been written in Iceland in the twelfth century.[1] If this is so then possibly the idea of Olaf visiting 'localities in Spain' might go back to this twelfth-century lost work, but even if so it does not mean it was really so.

In the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* itself we find many explicit and implicit borrowings from Sigvatr's verses. In the part which concerns us here we find a very saga-like and condensed story. If I can paraphrase it in English: after some talk of Olaf in Scandinavia it says that afterwards Olaf sailed west with his band to England, and that from now on Olaf and his band and Jarl Thorkell the Tall were on a viking expedition. Olaf then wanted to reach the Strait of Gibraltar (*Norvasunda*) and he lay for a long time ready to set off but he did not get any (fair) wind to go there; God then revealed to him that he should not head further South, but rather it would be better if he went North and sought out his homeland. This he did. He turned around and came to *Væini*, journeyed up the *Læiru* and fought there. He burned down a trading place there called *Varrandi*. This was the thirteenth battle.[2]

This is the only place where it is said explicitly that Olaf had joined up with Thorkell the Tall in England,[3] plus that after leaving England Olaf headed off towards *Norvasunda* (generally interpreted, probably rightly, as meaning the Strait of Gibraltar),[4] and as given by Snorri Sturluson in his own late interpretation in his so-called *Heimskringla* although in an even more saga-like and dubious story than is the case here.

The statement that Olaf then entered *Læiru* (generally taken as being the Loire) and burned the trading place called *Varrandi* clearly comes via whatever route from Sigvatr's stanza 14

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[1] See G. Lange, *Die Anfänge der isländisch-norwegischen Geschichtsschreibung*, *Studia Islandica*, 47 (Reykjavík, 1989), pp. 156-57.

[2] See A. Heinrichs, D. Jahnsen, E. Radicke, and H. Röhn, eds. and trans., *Olafs saga hins helga. Die 'Legenarische saga' über Olaf den Heiligen* (Heidelberg, 1982), pp. 62-63, for both the original vernacular and a German translation.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 62: 'En æftir þat hellt Olafr liði sinu væstr til Ænglanz. Siðan lago pæir i vikingu Olafr oc lið hans oc porkiæll hinn haue iarl.'

[4] *Ibid*.: 'þa villdi Olafr fara ut til Norvasunda oc la længi til oc villdi æigi byria. oc fecc þa vitran at guð villdi æigi at hann kome sunnar. oc fære hælldr norðr oc sætte oðal sin.'

which we shall discuss immediately below,[1] and it has nothing of any independent value for us. The recent (1982) German editors and translators of *the Legendary saga of St Óláfr* just follow the usual (but most probably incorrect) historiographical identification of *Varrandi* with Guérande.[2] But you do not sail up the Loire to get to Guérande, it in fact lies on the sea in southern Brittany just north of the mouth of the Loire. Also, the German editors suggest that the otherwise unknown place *Væini* (variants *Veini*/*Vænu*) is possibly the Vendée in Aquitanian Lower Poitou.[3] This, whilst it is geographically quite possible, seems to be just an editorial attempt to take this late story at face value and fit in a place where Olaf, coming back 'north', might have made landfall; in fact the Vendée region did not become so named until the nineteenth century and it took its name from the river Vendée which is a tributary of the Sèvre Niortaise and which in the tenth and eleventh centuries was called *fluvium Vendre* and then *flumen Vendee* and *Vendeia.*[4] I therefore do not think that Veini/Væini/Vænu can have meant the river Vendée. Perhaps what we have here is a late deformation by the author of the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* of *Peitu/Pæitu* (probably Poitou) found in Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* and in a stanza of his nephew Óttarr the Black[5] into *Veini/Væini/Vænu*? I thank Simon Lebouteiller for this interesting and very cogent idea.[6]

All of the foregoing regarding the *Heimskringla*, the *Historia Norwegiae*, the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* and so on is still highly debated by scholars, both regarding the precise dates when all these late stories were written and the nature and direction of transmission between these and other twelfth- and thirteenth-century Norwegian and Icelandic texts. I am not really qualified or knowledgeable enough to offer any original thoughts on such 'transmission' matters but I would just say this: However, whenever, and wherever all these ideas were transmitted between various twelfth-century and thirteenth-century Norwegian and Icelandic

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[1] It is interesting to note that Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* at stanza thirteen has Olaf's 'thirteenth battle' being at *Seljupollar*, whereas here in the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* it is at *Læiru/Varrandi.* In *Víkingarvísur* the fights at these places are given no numbers.
[2] A. Heinrichs *et al*, eds. and trans. *Olafs saga hins helga*, p. 62, n. 53.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 62, n. 52.
[4] P.-H. Billy, *Dictionnaire des noms de lieux de la France* (Paris, 2011), p. 561.
[5] Both of which will be cited and referenced below.
[6] Personal communication. In full, Simon Lebouteiller says: 'Dans leurs poèmes [those of Sigvatr and Óttarr the Black], on retrouve quelques toponymes mentionnés dans la saga (Læiru, Varrande). Pas de trace de Vænu/Væini ici, mais les scaldes mentionnent tous les deux "Peitu" - j'ai aussi vu la graphie Pæitu dans la Flateyjarbók -, qui est habituellement traduit par Poitou. Je n'ai évidemment aucune preuve, mais je pense que cela ne serait pas farfelu d'imaginer qu'il y ait pu y avoir une déformation de Peitu/Pæitu en Væini/Vænu. Dans les manuscrits norrois, les lettres P et V se ressemblent beaucoup et on peut très facilement confondre un TU avec un NI. Ce genre d'erreurs n'est d'ailleurs pas rare en paléographie norroise. Finalement, à titre personnel, je pencherais pour le fait de ne pas traduire Væini/Vænu par Vendée, mais un autre avis pour le norrois ne fera naturellement pas de mal.' On the other hand, in personal correspondence Martin Aurell says: 'Why is not the river possible in Old Norse?'

writers, their accounts for what concerns us here are all ultimately based on their much later interpretations of Sigvatr's eleventh-century 'Viking Verses',[1] and in these verses themselves there is absolutely no mention of any place that can definitively be placed in Iberia/Spain.

Moving on from such matters, and of more interest for our investigation of Aquitaine is Sigvatr's stanza 14 which reads:

> Malms vann Mœra hilmir
> munnrjóðr, es kom sunnan,
> gang, þars gamlir sprungu
> geirar, upp at Leiru.
> Varð fyr víga Njǫrðum
> Varrandi sjá fjarri
> brenndr á byggðu landi
> - bœr heitir svá - Peitu.[2]

This is translated by Judith Jesch as:

> {The reddener {of the mouth of the sword}} [(lit. 'mouth-reddener of the sword') SWORD BLADE > WARRIOR], {the ruler of the Mœrir} [NORWEGIAN KING = Óláfr], when he came from the south, fought his way up to the Loire, where old spears shattered. Varrandi, far from the sea in the settlements of Poitou, was burned for {the Nirðir <gods> of battles} [WARRIORS]; the town is so named.[3]

Or as Alison Finlay and Anthony Faulkes translate it:

> The sword's mouth-reddener, the Mœrir's master, when he came northwards, fought his way where ancient spears were shattered up by the Leira. For warfare-Nirðir,[4] Varrandi - so named is the town, distant from the sea in settled land - was set on fire in Peita.[5]

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[1] Not to forget Óttarr the Black.
[2] J. Jesch, 'Sigvatr Þórðarson, *Víkingarvísur* 14', p. 532.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Heimskringla II*, p. 16, n. 42, say of 'víga Nirðir': "Nirðir (plural of Njǫrðr, a god) of battles", warriors, men (here, townspeople)'.
[5] *Heimskringla II*, pp. 15-16. See also R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, pp. 36-37.

This move from the south (according to some from northern Iberia, but in my view probably more likely just from further south in Aquitaine) to *Pieta*/*Pietu* (probably Poitou), is also quoted by Snorri Sturluson from a verse of Óttarr the Black's so-called *Hǫfuðlausn*:[1]

> War-glad king, you were able young to ravage Pieta. The painted targe you tested in Túskaland, ruler.[2]

Or as Régis Boyer translates Óttarr's verse into French:

> Prince ardent au combat,
> Tu entrepris, jeune, de dévaster le Poitou.
> Tu fis l'épreuve, roi,
> De ton écu peint, en Tuskaland.[3]

If we accept that Sigvatr's and Óttarr the Black's *Pieta*/*Pietu* means Poitou and that Sigvatr's

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[1] Óttarr the Black was also at one time a skald of Olaf Haraldsson.

[2] *Heimskringla II*, p. 15. M. Townend, 'Óttarr svarti, *Hǫfuðlausn* 12', in D. Whaley (ed.), *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas 1: From Mythical Times to c. 1035*, p. 756: 'Ógnteitr jǫfurr, nôðuð ungr at eyða Peitu; ræsir, reynduð steinda rǫnd á Túskalandi.' Online: https://skaldic.abdn.ac.uk/db.php?id=3570&if=default&table=verses&val=reykholt.

[3] R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 36. The idea that Túskaland means the Touraine goes back to Finnur Jónsson (ed.), *Lexicon poeticum antiquæ linguæ septentrionalis: Ordbog over det norsk-islandske skjaldesprog oprindelig forfattet af Sveinbjörn Egilsson*, 2nd edn. (Copenhagen, 1931), but also, and well before him, to P. A. Munch's mid-nineteenth-century 'Olaf Haraldssøns Vikingetog', in *Det norske folks historie*, vol. 4, p. 47. One should mention here as well that it is to Munch in this study that we originally owe the many now accepted identifications of other places in Sigvatr's verses as being in France/Aquitaine. R. Boyer (*ibid.*) identifies *Tuskaland* as the Touraine, as does J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie* (Rennes, 1989), p. 99. J. Jesch (*ibid.*, p. 532) says: 'Óláfr 'laid waste to Poitou' and fought in Touraine (the area around Tours, also on the Loire). Óttarr's stanza may indeed record raids in these areas that were not mentioned by Sigvatr, or that have not survived in Víkv (note that the numbering of battles has ceased by this point).' M. Townend (*ibid.*, p. 756, n. 4) says: '*Túskalandi* "Touraine": Unlike *Peita*, this p. n. is not recorded in the extant stanzas of Sigv Víkv. Apparently the first element is a gen. pl., "of the *Túskar*", but who the *Túskar* are is unknown.' Nothing could be less sure. In my opinion it is very doubtful that any Northmen at this time penetrated as far up the Loire as the *pagus* of Tours, and there is not even a hint of them in the various chronicles of Tours or anywhere else. The location of Túskaland thus remains a complete mystery, although Óttarr's verse does to me perhaps hint that it was in or near the region of Poitou. One very tentative question is posed by P. Bauduin (pers. comm.), who asks that if we accept the identification of Túskaland with the Touraine then could it perhaps be an allusion to a campaign led against Odo II of Blois whose possessions also extended into the Touraine? This 'campaign' against Odo will be discussed later but I am not sure about this at all. In one of his internet musings Supéry suggests that 'Tuskaland may have been a name given to Gascony, and more precisely to the Pays de Born around Mimizan'; see 'Tuskaland, a no man's land?', available at https://www.academia.edu/35375935/Tuskaland_a_no_mans_land. I find his evidence and argumentation for this identification very slim at best although it is not completely impossible. If we say just 'Gascony' and not necessarily Mimizan (with which Supéry is a little obsessed) then this possible. It will perhaps also be remembered from earlier that following Fabricius's lead 'there is a whole strand in Iberian historiography which would actually make *Hringsfjǫrðr* the Bay of Biscay and *Hóll* probably Bayonne'. I would certainly say that this is unlikely to have been so. It is after all part of the general attempt (starting with Fabricius) to place all of the places mentioned in Sigvatr's relevant stanzas in Galicia, and thus making the first of these places be in the southern Aquitanian/Gascon part of the Bay of Biscay would fit in with this schema.

Leira/Leiru means the Loire, as is invariably done,[1] and I think we should too, then this is clearly of great importance for our investigation. Sigvatr's statement that 'Varrandi, far from the sea in the settlements of Poitou, was burned'[2] has very often and possibly erroneously been interpreted as meaning that 'Varrandi' means the town or peninsula of Guérande in southern Brittany.[3] But the fact that Sigvatr places *Varrandi* far from the sea and in Poitou would tell against this view because the peninsula of Guérande is in fact directly on the sea and it is not in any case in Poitou. If we are trying to find where Varrandi really was I think we would be better advised to look somewhere in inland Poitou.

But the point is that wherever Sigvatr's stanzas 12 and 13 are referring to (either in northern Spain or just in more-southerly Aquitaine), after this Olaf (or the fleet he was with) was 'back' in Poitou and around the mouth of the Loire.[4]

After this Sigvatr's extant stanzas have nothing more to say about Olaf until after his return to Norway in about 1015,[5] and I will not explore Olaf's later activities in Norway any more here.

As an interim conclusion: We have looked above at what Sigvatr's stanzas tell us about a young Olaf Haraldsson both in England and then further 'west' and 'south'. But what might we conclude about the whole idea that a good number of these stanzas refer to places in Galicia, an idea that goes back to the late nineteenth-century Danish historian Adam Fabricius but has been followed ever since with either alacrity or caution by historians of all nationalities? I have argued that the places mentioned in stanza 11, the 'town of Viljálmr' (*bœ Viljalms*) and *Grístupollar*, are referring to William V's Poitou, an idea that has found more and more acceptance over recent years but which has a long prehistory. We know as well that the places mentioned in stanza 14 after Olaf had been further south are referring to Poitou and the Loire. This leaves Sigvatr's stanzas 12 and 13. I have several times queried along the way whether we should place these too along the Poitevin or more southerly Aquitanian coast rather than in Galicia, particularly because as far as we can tell there were no Scandinavian attacks into Iberia at all at this time until those made into northern Portugal in 1015-1016, by which time Olaf Haraldsson was back in Norway. This is a view that has been recently argued for with great

[1] C. Fell, 'Víkingarvísur', p. 122, for example, says 'Leira is the river Loire', whilst R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 36, simply assumes *Leira* is the Loire. M. Townend (*ibid*., p. 739) and J. Jesch (*ibid*., p. 532) both just accept these places mean the Loire and Poitou.
[2] *Heimskringla II*, p. 16; R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, pp. 36-37.
[3] See just for example R. Boyer, *La saga de saint Óláf*, p. 277: 'Varrandi est Guérande, en Bretagne.' But yet again this idea goes back to P. A. Munch.
[4] I say 'back' in Poitou because as discussed earlier I think Sigvatr's 'town of William' in stanza 11 is referring to a town of William V of Poitiers/Aquitaine.
[5] See for example C. Fell, '*Víkingarvísu*r', p. 122.

learning, erudition and subtlety by the Portuguese historian of the Northmen in Iberia Hélio Pires in his excellent study 'Nem Tui, nem Gibraltar: Óláfr Haraldsson e a Península Ibérica'.[1] After studying and analysing all the evidence Pires's conclusion is that all the toponyms in Sigvatr's stanzas 11, 12 and 13 probably refer to places in France and not in Galicia/northern Iberia, and his very explicit 'conclusion' is that 'Óláfr may not have travelled beyond the Pyrenees'. My own analysis here leads me to the same conclusion: All the places named in Sigvatr's stanzas after the departure from England and the return north to the Seine were in France. Olaf most likely never went to Galician Spain.

But what might we suggest that Olaf, and other Northmen he was likely with, had done once he and they had left Poitou/the Loire?

Here one must examine the stories told by William of Jumièges in the mid-eleventh century, and his stories about an Olaf and a Lacman coming to the Seine and Rouen to assist Richard II of Normandy, and also them then going to help King Cnut in England thereafter.[2] We shall do so shortly, but the cores of William of Jumièges's stories were clearly adopted by many much later Scandinavian writers, including Snorri Sturluson and the author of the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr*.[3] Snorri's *Heimskringla* has a lot of the relevant parts strewn throughout various chapters. First:

> King Óláfr had been raiding in the west in Valland [France] for two summers and one winter. By then thirteen winters had passed since the fall of King Óláfr Tryggvason […].[4]

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[1] H. Pires, 'Nem Tui, nem Gibraltar: Óláfr Haraldsson e a Península Ibérica'. In this truly wonderful and insightful work Pires also engages with a very extensive Iberian historiography, often based, with some minor modifications here and there, on Fabricius's work. Just to mention one, Eduardo Morales Romero, who followed Fabricius in general, places Olaf's raids, into Galicia of course, in 1014-1015, before Olaf went to Rouen and received baptism there later in 1015, and his being back in Norway by 1016 for the battle of Nesjar. See E. Morales Romero, *Historia de los vikingos en España*, pp. 201-4. Of course, on the chronology being proposed in the present work this is impossible.

[2] For this chronology see later in this chapter.

[3] For some discussion of these links see L. B. Mortensen, 'The Anchin manuscript of *Passio Olavi* (Douai 295), William of Jumièges, and Theodoricus Monachus: New evidence for intellectual relations between Norway and France in the 12th century', *Symbolae Osloense*s, 75. 1 (2000), pp. 165-89.

[4] In the part missing here Snorri adds much confused 'information' about the rulers of France/Normandy at this time, and on the descendance of the rulers of Normandy from Jarl Gǫngu-Hrólfr' (supposedly Rollo): 'At this time there were two jarls in Valland, Viljálmr and Roðbert. Their father was Ríkarðr Rúðujarl (jarl of Rouen). They ruled over Normandy. Queen Emma, who had been married to King Aðalráðr of the English, was their sister. Their sons were these, Eaðmundr and Eatvarðr inn góði (the Good), Eatvígr and Eatgeirr. Ríkarðr Rúðujarl was son of Viljálmr langaspjót's (Longspear's) son Ríkarðr. He was son of Jarl Gǫngu-Hrólfr (Walker-), who conquered Normandy. He was son of Rǫgnvaldr inn ríki (the Great) jarl of the Mœrir, as is stated above. From Gǫngu-Hrólfr the jarls of Rúða are descended, and they for a long time afterwards claimed kinship with rulers of Norway and honoured them for this for a long time afterwards and were all the time very great friends of the Norwegians, and all Norwegians found a welcome there who wanted one.' See *Heimskringla II*, p. 16.

> In the autumn King Óláfr came to Normandy and stayed the winter there on the Seine and was welcomed there.[1]

Given that Óláfr Tryggvason seems to have died at the semi-legendary Battle of Svolder in 1000 (or maybe 999), the dating of thirteen winters after his death implies that Olaf came to 'Normandy' in the autumn of 1013 and stayed over the subsequent winter there - until 1014. This information can only have derived from the Norman tradition, starting with the *GND*, telling of an Olaf on the Seine. Snorri's 'raiding in France (Valland) for two summers and one winter' seems also in this context to suggest that Olaf was raiding here between the summer of 1012 and the summer of 1013 which would certainly fit in with the scenario being explored and proposed here. After which in chapters 21-26 of *Heimskringla* we are treated to much garbled speculation on the earlier career and death of Óláfr Tryggvason and other Scandinavian magnates, as well as some mixed-up reporting of later events in England running from 1016/17 involving King Cnut, after he had married Emma (in 1017), the 'sons of King Æthelred', including Edmund ('Ironside'),[2] and even the notorious Mercian ealdorman Eadric *Streona*.[3] But after this retrospective and prospective interlude in chapter 27 of *Heimskringla* Snorri writes:

> King Aðalráðr of the English's sons [or 'the sons of Æthelred, the king of the English] came from England to Rúða in Valland to their maternal uncles[4] the same summer as Óláfr Haraldsson returned from viking raids in the west, and that winter they were all in Normandy and they formed a league together on the understanding that Óláfr was to have Northumberland if they won England from the Danes. Then in the autumn Óláfr sent his foster-father Hrani to England to raise forces there, and Aðalráðr's sons sent him with tokens of authority to his friends and relations, and King Óláfr provided him with a great deal of money to attract forces to join them. And Hrani spent the winter in England and gained the confidence of many of the ruling class, and the people of the country were more disposed to have native kings over them, but even so the power of the Danes in England had grown so great that all the inhabitants had become subjected to their rule.[5]

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[1] *Heimskringla II*, p. 16.
[2] Edmund 'Ironside' died on 30 November 1016; see A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 131.
[3] See *Heimskringla II*, pp. 16-20; R. Boyer, *La Saga de saint Óláf*, pp. 37-40.
[4] I prefer R. Boyer's translation here (cf. *La Saga de saint Óláf*, pp. 40-41): 'Les fils de roi Adelrádr vinrent d'Angleterre à Rúda, en Valland, chez leurs oncles maternels.' The 'maternal uncles' refer not just to Richard II but also to Emma's and Richard's brother Archbishop Robert of Rouen.
[5] *Heimskringla II*, p. 20.

Æthelred himself had fled England for Rouen in Normandy in January 1014,[1] but two of his sons (and his Norman wife Emma, the sister of Richard II) had fled slightly earlier, though separately, sometime in late 1013.[2] If Æthelred's sons came to Rouen in 'the same summer as Óláfr Haraldsson returned from viking raids in the west' then this seems to mean Olaf came to Rouen 1013 and stayed until 1014. This is the view adopted by many historians, including myself. Then in chapter 28 of *Heimskringla* Snorri writes:

> In the spring they all returned from the west together, King Óláfr and King Aðalráðr's sons, arriving in England at a place called Jungufurða, going up ashore with their forces and on to the city.[3] There they found many of the men who had promised them support. They won the city and killed many people. But when King Knútr's men realised this, then they assembled an army that soon became numerous, so that King Aðalráðr's sons did not have the numbers to withstand them, and saw that their best course was to withdraw and return westwards to Rúða.[4] So King Óláfr parted from them and refused to go to Valland. He sailed north along the coast of England right on to Northumberland. He landed in the harbour known as off Valdi (*firrir Vallda*)[5] and fought there with the citizens, and gained the victory and much booty there.[6]

After this *Heimskringla* relates Olaf's return to Norway supported by two more verses of Óttarr the Black.[7]

At the core of Snorri's interpretations, we find real historical events of 1013 and 1014: Of the flight of Æthelred's sons to their uncle Richard in Normandy, and although just implicitly in *Heimskringla* of Æthelred's own flight a little later as found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and, for example, in John of Worcester's *Chronicle*. But all these 'English' histories which were written well before Snorri was composing his *Heimskringla* say nothing about any

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[1] *ASC s.a.* 1014, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 145; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 126. Or maybe late December 1013.

[2] *ASC s.a.* 1013, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 144; P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith, Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 223. The princes Edward and Alfred went to Normandy, the older princes (those born to Æthelred's first wife) remained behind; see P. Stafford, *ibid.*

[3] No one has ever been able to identify *Jungufurða* except to assert it was somewhere in England. If we follow English sources (particularly the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle s.a.* 1014), when Æthelred returned to England in Lent of 1014 (16 March to 24 April) he came 'into Lindsey' with his whole army 'and then all human kind that could be got at were raided and burned and killed'. So, if there is any basis to accept the mention of *Jungufurða* then we should likely need to seek it somewhere in Lindsey in what we might call Southumbria.

[4] There is no evidence that any of Æthelred's sons returned to Rouen except at a later date.

[5] R. Boyer, *La Saga de saint Óláf*, p. 278, would identify 'Devant Valdi' as meaning the (Yorkshire) Wolds: 'rangée de collines à l'embouchhure de la Humber'. This is not at all impossible but it is just a guess.

[6] *Heimskringla II*, pp. 20-21.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

involvement of Olaf in Æthelred's return from Normandy. In fact, what they say is that it was after Swein's death on 3 February 1014 that all the English lay and ordained councillors sent word to the king asking him to return. Æthelred sent his son Edward back to England to negotiate and then when the conditions were agreed upon the king returned himself 'in spring'.[1] This does not absolutely exclude the possibility that Olaf helped Æthelred return, although doubt might be cast on this by Snorri's story of the semi-legendary Hrani's mission to England, supposedly *before* Æthelred had even fled to Normandy. This is apparent when we compare what the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* says about the same matter. After telling of Olaf's raids to the south then to the Poitou/Loire region, which were discussed and cited earlier, it says, in my own translation:

> Olaf spent the winter on the Seine and sent Rani, his foster-father, over to England, in order via means of gifts of money and assurances of friendship to get support for himself [Olaf]. Rani did this, he travelled far and wide throughout the country and eventually came to London. He reported that Olaf was on his way to England in ships. Olaf had his fourteenth fight in the area of Jungafurda and was victorious in battle against vikings (*vikinga*). He had the fifteenth fight in the west near Valdi and won this.[2]

So far so good. Both these late interpretations seem to be talking of Olaf's arrival in England, in 1014 let us say, and two fights he had there against other Scandinavians or vikings. However, the author of the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* makes no mention at all of Æthelred nor of his sons. But the *Legendary saga* then gets somewhat fanciful, telling a long and very saga-like story of Olaf and Thorkell the Tall then going together to Ireland and fighting battles there, a story I will not explore more here.[3] Whatever the precise relationships between *Heimskringla* and the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* (and whether both borrowed from the older but now largely

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[1] *ASC* E *s.a.* 1014, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 144-45.

[2] Cf. A. Heinrichs *et al.*, eds. and trans. *Olafs saga hins helga*, pp. 62-63; R. Keyser and C. R. Unger, eds. *Olafs saga hins helga*, p. 13.

[3] R. Keyser and C. R. Unger, eds. *Olafs saga hins helga*, pp. 13-14. A. Williams, 'Thorkell the Tall', p. 11 (online version), observes: 'After 1013, the *Chronicle* has no more to say about Thorkell until 1017, when Cnut made him earl of East Anglia, but precisely when Thorkell went over to Cnut is unclear. Since the summer of 1014 saw the payment of £21,000 to "the army that lay at Greenwich" Thorkell was presumably still in Æthelred's employ at that point.' She adds (*ibid*, n. 35): 'It is true that Thorkell is not named as the commander in 1014, and the situation is complicated by the fact that Æthelred had secured the services of Olaf *helgi* during his sojourn in Normandy [notice this acceptance]; but if Thorkell had defected, it is likely that the chronicler, whose indignation against the payment of 1014 is clear, would have mentioned it.' Williams (*ibid.*) would place Thorkell's defection from Æthelred to Cnut either in September 1015 or April 2016. When, therefore, Thorkell could possibly have fought battles in Ireland remains a mystery. So too with Olaf, who was (it appears) back in Norway by 1015. Nevertheless, the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr's* story here, fabulous though it seems, is interesting because whatever the author's original source might have been it does link some Scandinavian chieftains from England going to Ireland at around this time.

lost and so-called *Oldest saga of Saint Olaf*),[1] we see here two somewhat variant versions of Olaf coming to England. But regarding Olaf's stay 'on the Seine' or 'at Rouen' these interpretations must, at least in my opinion, ultimately derive, whether directly or indirectly, from William of Jumièges's *GND* which also tells of Olaf going to England after being with Richard II at Rouen although with a very different slant. These stories of William of Jumièges will be explored in the next section.

But, and finally, it is likely that Snorri got the core of his idea from a stanza of one of Olaf's skalds, Óttarr the Black (Óttarr *svarti*), in his so-called *Hǫfuðlausn* ('Head-ransom'):

> You brought to the land and made landed,
> land-guardian, Aðalráðr.
> This the counsellor of soldiers,
> strengthened with power, owed you.
> Hard was the battle by which you
> brought Játmundr's[2] kinsman to enter
> a land of peace; the family's pillar
> had previously ruled the country.[3]

It is generally believed that Óttarr *svarti* is referring here to Olaf Haraldsson, who brought (or helped come) Æthelred back to England.[4] It seems that this is what Snorri thought as well. This has led to many modern interpretations. For example, Ann Williams states very boldly:

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[1] A designation that comes originally from Gustav Storm.

[2] That is Eadmund, but which one?

[3] *Heimskringla II*, p. 11. Or to use Matthew Townend's version and translation: '{Láðvǫrðr}, komt Aðalráði í land ok lendir; efldr ríki, naut {rúni rekka} þín at slíku. Fundr vas harðr, sás fœrðuð {niðja Játmundar} á vit friðlands; áttstuðill réð grundu þar áðan', '{Land-guardian} [KING], you brought Æthelred into the land and gave [him] land; strengthened with a kingdom, {the counsellor of warriors} [KING = Æthelred] had help from you in this. The fighting was hard, by which you brought {the kinsman of Eadmund} [= Æthelred] into a land of peace; the prop of the family ruled the land there previously.' See M. Townend, 'Óttarr svarti, *Hǫfuðlausn*' in D. Whaley (ed.), *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas* 1, p. 739. But at least in *Heimskringla* this stanza is placed earlier, in the context of supposed events in England in *c.*1009. Subsequent historians and editors have almost invariably shifted the order of this stanza (and even renumbered it as number 13 and not number 8), placing it in the context of 1014, although whether this shift is really justified or not is highly debatable.

[4] Numerous historians accept this interpretation; to list just a few see: S. Coviaux, 'Norvège et Normandie au XIe siècle', p. 199 and n. 26: 'L'année suivante [1014], Olaf accompagna en Angleterre le roi anglo-saxon Æthelred, qui s'était réfugié en Normandie avec sa famille, chassé de son royaume par Sven à la Barbe fourchue, le roi des Danois' […] 'Le soutien apporté par Olaf à Æthelred est évoqué sans ambiguïté par une strophe scaldique d'Ottar le Noir, rapportée par Snorri Sturluson dans la *Saga de saint Olaf*'; A. Campbell, *Encomium Emmae*, p. 78: 'This verse can only mean that Óláfr assisted Æthelred when he returned to England in 1014, and, if the words *harðr vas fundr* [or *Fundr vas harðr*] are to be taken literally, they must mean that Óláfr took part in the East Anglian campaign, when Knútr fled before Æthelred'; *idem*, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History', pp. 11-12; L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', p. 47; R. Poole, 'Skaldic verse and Anglo-Saxon history', p. 272; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 126-27: D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066*, p. 37.

> Nor had the king [Æthelred] been idle during his enforced exile [in Normandy]. On his arrival at Rouen, in the second week of January 1014, he had met with another member of the 'immense raiding army',[1] Thorkell's old ally Oláf *helgi*. Since his departure from England, Oláf had been campaigning on the Continent, where his marauding had taken him from Brittany down to northern Spain and back via Poitou to Normandy. By the winter of 1013, he was in the employ of Duke Richard II, and it was allegedly at this point that he received Christian baptism from Archbishop Robert of Rouen. The occasion of Oláf's engagement was Duke Richard's projected war with Odo of Chartres.[2] When this was abandoned, Oláf was at a loose end, and his services were once more available for hire. Precisely when he entered the service of Æthelred is unknown, but it was perhaps only after the first overtures had been made by the repentant English […].[3] Óttarr *svarti* claims that his hero 'assured his realm to Æthelred', and it is probable that both he and Thorkell were present when the king, 'with his full force' (*mid fulre fyrde*), fell upon Cnut and his allies in Lindsey in the Spring of 1014.[4]

Williams references the stanza of Óttarr *svarti* just quoted.[5] But she goes on to say that: 'The last two verses of Sighvatr's *Víkingarvísur* refer to battles in England (at unidentified places) after continental adventures, and these may relate to engagements fought on behalf of Æthelred.'[6] But actually these two 'battles in England' are not anywhere mentioned in Sigvatr's extant *Víkingarvísur*, they are in fact, as we have just seen, only mentioned in Snorri's *Heimskringla* and in the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr*. The whole idea that there were originally two now missing stanzas in Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* detailing two battles of Olaf in England goes back at least to Alistair Campbell in 1949 in his discussion of the *Encomium Emmae*, which he nuanced a little in his much later 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History'.[7] But both

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[1] The 'immense raiding army' is a reference to the army which arrived in England in 1009.
[2] This is all referencing William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* which will be discussed in more detail below.
[3] The 'repentant English' is a reference to the story told in the *ASC s.a.* 1014, trans Swanton, p. 145.
[4] A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, pp. 126-27.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 220, n. 85.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] This whole idea originally derives from Alistair Campbell who says (*Encomium Emmae*, pp. 78-79): 'Óláfr seems to have carried out two raids on the English coast on his way back to Norway in 1014 - the sixteenth and seventeenth battles of Sigvatr's series - but this is no argument against the assumption, that Óláfr and Æthelred were on good terms in 1014 […]. It is, of course, open to anyone to assume that the sixteenth and seventeenth battles were fought on Æthelred's behalf, and that Óláfr "mopped up" pockets of Danes who remained after Knútr's flight in 1014, or assisted in the punishment of Knútr's English adherents in Lindsey [as does Ann Williams for example]. It is extremely probable that Óttar's verse reflects what actually happened in 1014. We know from William of Jumièges, that Óláfr was at the court of Richard of Normandy during a war, which may reasonably be dated about the time Æthelred was an exile at the Norman court. If Óláfr had then met Æthelred, he would have introduced himself as an ally of Thorkell, who was almost the only friend Æthelred then had in the

Campbell's and Williams's interpretations also make great use William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*. It is to this we now turn.

William of Jumièges and the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*

Elisabeth van Houts, the latest editor and English translator of William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, which was written for the part which concerns us here in the later 1050s, argued for a Scandinavian influence on Norman literature.[1]

She draws attention to the story told by Ademar of Chabannes about the Northmen's abduction of Emma of Limoges and links it with the 'alliance' made between Richard II and Swein Forkbeard as told of by William of Jumièges, which event she places in 1003. She says: 'In 1003 the Danish king Svein Forkbeard paid a visit to Duke Richard II in Rouen and both concluded a treaty of alliance and mutual assistance. At about the same time the Norman duke negotiated with the Vikings who kept Emma, the viscountess of Limoges, prisoner for nearly three years. Thanks to the duke's interference she was freed from the hands of the Vikings.'[2] Here van Houts is suggesting that it was in around 1003 that Emma was released (implicitly therefore by Swein Forkbeard at the instigation of Richard II of Normandy), and thus that her capture must necessarily have happened in about the year 1000.

The dating of the alliance or treaty made between Swein Forkbeard and Richard II is still highly debated; was it in 1003 or in 1013? In general, the later date is now generally preferred but it is still not certain.[3] From an Aquitanian perspective maybe this all seems a little suspect. There is a report in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that in the year 1000: 'That summer the hostile fleet [in England] had gone to Richard's kingdom',[4] that is to Normandy.[5] It has occasionally been suggested that Swein Forkbeard had led this fleet and that it was a continuation of Swein's earlier raids in England in the 990s, but this may be doubted because Swein's apparent

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world, and could have returned to England assured of some help in fitting out an expedition against the rulers of Norway, who were equally his enemies and Æthelred's.' Where Alistair Campbell got the idea from that the two battles in England were Olaf's 'sixteenth and seventeenth' is unclear, because even the *Legendary saga of St Óláfr* numbers these fights as being numbers fourteen and fifteen. In his later 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History', pp. 11-12, Campbell nuanced this somewhat. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to extricate oneself from, or even just to question, such a seemingly firmly established or even entrenched historiographical tradition as this, but I think we must at least try because ultimately it is all solely based on a particular and debatable interpretation of a very obscure skaldic stanza of Óttarr *svarti*.

[1] E. van Houts, 'Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century', pp. 107-24.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 111.

[3] For a thorough and nuanced discussion of this whole matter see P. Bauduin, '*Quasi in domo propria sub securitate sanaretur*: a peace agreement between king Sven Forkbeard and duke Richard II of Normandy', forthcoming. I thank Bauduin for letting me have a prepublication version of this article.

[4] *ASC* E *s.a.* 1000, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 133.

[5] For which see also P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes : autour du traité de 991'.

involvement in the so-called Battle of Svolder (or Svold), usually dated to 1000 (but sometimes to 999) would tend to exclude this. Yet whoever the Scandinavian leader who had taken the 'hostile fleet' from England to Normandy in 1000 may have been - and this likely in a friendly rather than an aggressive manner -[1] this 'same or another Viking force sailed up the Exe and besieged Exeter' in the next year.[2] Whether or not the 'same' fleet was involved there is no suggestion or hint in any record we have that those who had gone to Richard's Normandy in the year 1000 had ventured further south into Aquitaine, which they would have had to have done to make any sense of van Houts's suggestion that it was in about this year that Emma of Limoges was captured.

But van Houts then goes on to assess supposed later events, bringing together Ademar's stories, those of William of Jumièges, and the skald Sigvatr *Þórðarson's* verses in his so-called *Víkingarvísur* which have just been discussed.[3] Her opinion is of such importance for the matters in hand and has been so influential in subsequent historiography that I think we should quote her in full:

> Another passage in the *GND* concerning Scandinavian affairs speaks about the early career of Olaf, the later king and first martyr of Norway. William of Jumièges is our only non-Scandinavian source to name Olaf and to tell us about his Viking raids in France.[4]

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[1] P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes', p. 205, has pointed out that at around this time 'Rouen demeurait un marché aux esclaves où étaient vendus des captifs venus des îles Britanniques'. For more detail on this aspect see L. Musset, 'Le satiriste Garnier de Rouen et son milieu (début du XIe siècle)', *Revue du Moyen Age latin*, 1 (1954), pp. 237-66; *idem*, 'La Seine normande et le commerce maritime du IIIe au XIe siècle', *Revue de Sociétés Savantes de Haut-Normandie*, 53 (1969), pp. 3-14, reprinted in *Nordica et Normannnica* (1997), pp. 337-49, esp. pp. 344-45. There is also an undated report by William of Jumièges (*GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, V. 4, pp. 10-15) telling us of how, seemingly at some point after Æthelred's marriage to Emma (in 1002), a discord had arisen between Æthelred and Richard which led to an unsuccessful raid by Æthelred's English fleet into the Cotentin (at Val-de-Saire, dep. Manche) in an attempt to capture Richard. Éric Van Torhoudt, *Centralité et marginalité*, vol. 1, pp. 57-62, n. 33, vol. 2, p. 622, dates this attack to between 996 and 1008-1009, and probably to 1003, but this dating is very much open to question even if the event ever happened at all. Alistair Campbell (*Encomium Emmae*, p. xlii) cogently argued that this raid happened before Emma's marriage, as did James Campbell, 'England, France, Flanders and Germany in the Reign of Ethelred II: Some Comparisons and Connections', in his *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1995), pp. 191-207, at pp. 199-200. I do not doubt that such an English attack in Breton Cotentin took place at some time and in specific circumstances, but whether this was in 1003 or earlier is not at all clear. The whole dossier requires a fuller examination than I can undertake here.

[2] See *ASC* E *s.a.* 1001, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 141-42; A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready.* p. 48. P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes', p. 205, and S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England', p. 75, accept that it was the same ones who returned.

[3] Regarding Sigvatr's verses, E. van Houts only references here J. de Vries, *Altnordische Literaturgeschichte*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1964), pp. 253-58, but we should also look at a few of his earlier pages; plus E. O. G. Turville-Petre, *Scaldic Poetry* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 77-87. In addition, she refers to L. M. Hollander, trans. *Snorri Sturluson: Heimskringla, History of the Kings of Norway* (Austin, 1964), pp. 245-537, at pp. 245-64, and A. Campbell, 'Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History' pp. 3-16.

[4] It will be noticed that van Houts has immediately jumped to the conclusion that William of Jumièges's Olaf was Olaf Haraldsson.

His account shows a striking resemblance to the contemporary skaldic verses of Sigvatr. He was an Icelandic skald living at the court of the later King Olaf from 1015 onwards. Sigvatr's poem entitled *Viking verses* is the most important source for our knowledge of Olaf's Viking career. Thanks to the fact that his skaldic verses were incorporated in later sagas (e.g., the saga collection known as the *Heimskringla*), they have come down to us. It is remarkable that the poetry is hardly ever used as a source on Norman history, for the poem of Sigvatr agrees with the *GND* in its account of Olaf raiding the coast of Brittany. According to William of Jumièges, Olaf, together with his unidentified companion *Lacman rex Suauorum*, was asked by Richard II for assistance against Odo of Chartres. Before a battle was fought Olaf and *Lacman* attacked the coast of Brittany, defeated the Bretons by trickery, captured the castle of Dol and returned to Rouen. The trick used by the Vikings to win the battle against the Bretons consisted of digging trenches in the battlefield. The trenches were narrowed on the surface in order not to be noticed at first sight. As soon as the Breton cavalry entered the battlefield the horses stumbled and before the battle had actually started the Breton cause was lost. The skaldic poetry of Sigvatr does not mention this trick. It does, however, refer to the capture of the castle of Dol, at least if we are allowed to identify William's Dol with the skald's *Hól*. According to Sigvatr, Olaf went further south and also attacked the coast of Aquitania where he won a battle against William V of Aquitania. For this we do have independent evidence in the Chronicle of Adémar of Chabannes (c.1030), where it is said that the Vikings got their victory by cunning. According to Adémar, who does not seem to know Olaf, the Vikings dug trenches in the battlefield during the night. They covered these with sods so that the next morning the horses of the Aquitanians immediately broke their legs when they fell into the pits. William's story that Olaf, returning from his raids, stayed in Normandy and was even baptised by Archbishop Robert, is not to be found in the skaldic verses. William tells us that Olaf returned to Norway and was betrayed and murdered by his own people (1030). He calls Olaf king and martyr and depicts him as now enlightening his people with his miracles and virtues. By saying this William of Jumièges is one of the earliest sources to refer to Olaf's martyrdom, holiness and miracles. William must have got this information about Saint Olaf either by way of England or directly from Norway.[1]

[1] E. van Houts, 'Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature', pp. 118-19.

This is a view which she later also summarises, but with some very noticeable differences,[1] in her edition and translation of the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*:

> The chronology here is very confused. The invasion of Brittany and the capture of Dol by the viking Olaf *happened some years before* [my emphasis] Olaf assisted the Danes in their invasion of England in 1009.[2] The most reliable source for the order of events of Olaf's viking career before he became king of Norway in 1013 or 1014 is his skald Sigvatr's poem *Vikingavisur* written in about 1015 [...]. On his way back to Norway in 1013 or 1014 Olaf came to Normandy at the request of Duke Richard II in order to assist in the struggle against Count Odo of Chartres. William of Jumièges conflated the invasion of Brittany and the visit to Normandy in 1013/14.[3]

In essence this is the present view held by nearly all historians, and it has been for some time. But there are so many hidden or lurking assumptions packed into all this that we should perhaps not be so quick to leap to such conclusions.

Let us, therefore, first look at William of Jumièges's stories on their own. We are first told of Odo, the count of Chartres, marrying Richard's sister Mathilda, but she died some years later without children. This led Richard to demand her dowry be returned which led to a conflict between Richard and Odo. This is then explained in detail, but it culminated in Richard building a stronghold at Tillières which he left in the care of some of his allies. But Odo with his allies attacked this stronghold without success.[4] Mathilde was, it seems, dead by 1005 because by then her husband Odo had married Ermengarde of the Auvergne.[5] It is her dowry (*dot*) that

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[1] In her article just cited above van Houts not only equates Dol and *Hóll* but she also suggests that William of Jumièges's story and that told of by Sigvatr refer to an identical event at the same time; but in the later summary, which follows, whilst the identity of places is maintained she suggests that these attacks on Dol/*Hól* happened several years apart.

[2] The unlikelihood of there ever having been any attack on Brittany some years before 1009 will be highlighted below. But van Houts clearly says here that this (theoretical) earlier attack was led by Olaf! Really? How old would he have been then?

[3] E. van Houts, *GND*, vol. II, pp. 24-25, n. 3

[4] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed and trans. van Houts, V. 10, pp. 22-25.

[5] L. Lex, *Eudes, comte de Blois, de Tours, de Chartres, de Troyes et de Meaux (995-1037), et Thibaud, son frère (995-1004)* (Troyes, 1892), pp. 26, 28-29; C. Pfister, *Études sur le règne de Robert le Pieux (996-1031)* (Paris, 1885), p. 215, n. 1; M. Bur, *La formation du comté de Champagne v. 950 - v. 1150* (Nancy, 1977), p. 154; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182. We do not know exactly when Odo and Mathilde were married, Léonce Lex suggests in 1004 (*ibid.*), and thus that the marriage was very short. For the same opinion regarding the dating of Count Odo's remarriage to '1005' see J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie*, p. 98, but Renaud quite rightly says here that: 'Nous ignorons la date de ce marriage.' E. van Houts, 'The political relations between Normandy and England before 1066 according to the "Gesta Normannorum Ducum"', in R. Foreville (ed.), *Les Mutations socio-culturelles au tournant des XIe-XIIe siècles, Actes du IVe colloque international anselmien* (Paris, 1984), pp. 85-97, at p. 91, suggests 1003, while P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, p. 215, thinks '1002 is just a likely'. P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 184, and nn. 30, 31, suggests that although the date of this marriage

William says caused the fight between Richard II and Count Odo.[1] Then William goes on to say:

> When the duke perceived the extent of Count Odo's folly[2] he sent messengers to ask for help from two kings of lands overseas [*transmarinis partibus*], Olaf of the Norsemen and Lacman of the Swedes [*Olauum scilicet Noricorum et Lacman Suauorum*], with a host of heathens. After giving his envoys a suitable welcome these kings sent couriers back loaded with many gifts and the message that they soon would come. Both gathered their armies, spread the sails of their ships to the wind, and sailing over the foaming sea came speedily to shore on the nearest coasts of Brittany. When the Bretons observed their sudden arrival, they gathered troops from all over the country and reckoned to catch them by surprise when they were off guard, engaged in collecting booty. When the heathens discovered their wiles, they devised a trap and on the flat ground over which the Bretons would approach them, they dug very deep trenches which were narrow on the surface, so that when the horsemen went over them their horses would break their legs, fall unbecomingly to the ground, and thus more readily be killed with their swords. When the Bretons arrived, they instantly made a fierce attack on the enemy. When many victims were claimed by the traps, they were immediately subjected to so savage an assault that only a few could escape the carnage.[3] From there the heathens advanced and laid siege to the town of Dol, and having captured it, they set fire to it and burnt it after having killed all its inhabitants including Salomon, guardian of the place. Thereafter they raised their anchors and put out to sea again. They sailed the fleet to the estuary of the Seine and,

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is unknown (but certainly before 1005) it may have been envisaged in 995 when 'Foulques Nerra' made an appeal for Norman reinforcements, at least according to Richer of Reims.

[1] For a good overview see P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, pp. 181-85; L. Lex, *Eudes, comte de Blois*, pp. 26-29.

[2] That is Odo's 'folly' in attacking Richard's new stronghold at Tillières.

[3] As was mentioned earlier the tactics described here are extremely reminiscent of those described by Ademar of Chabannes regarding the fight of the Northmen in Aquitaine with William V. Similar tactics were also employed during the siege of Paris in 886. Judith Jesch ('Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age', p. 263) says: 'This similarity can be interpreted in several ways. There might be a direct literary connection between Adémar (writing before 1034) and William (writing in the 1070s) [although actually probably earlier], or it might be a standard literary motif used independently by the two chroniclers, or it might indeed have happened twice, in both places. In the latter case, this would suggest that the same Viking troop, having tried the trick once and found it successful, used it again. This may be a small additional piece of evidence to link Sighvatr's stanza with Aquitaine rather than Spain.' C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) comments: 'The resemblance between tactics of subterfuge described here and by Ademar of Chabannes is indeed interesting. There may be an element of commonplace, with subterfuge (like heathenism) a stereotypical attribute of nefarious Vikings. On the other hand, the *Annals of Ulster* for 918 attribute Viking success at the battle of the Tyne against the Picts/Scots to subterfuge, in the form of an ambush or surprise attack by a hidden Viking cohort. The chronicler of AU for the period *circa* 914-921 often displays a considerable interest in military practicalities, so in this case we can safely infer a reflex of reality. I am not qualified to judge whether William of Jumièges's remark here is of similar value or is merely literary commonplace.'

> navigating along that river, they swiftly rowed to Rouen, where the duke Richard very gladly received them with honour befitting kings.[1]

Following this we are told:

> When King Robert of the French heard about the shameless behaviour of the heathens towards the Bretons and how Duke Richard had summoned them to punish Count Odo's disobedience, he feared that France might be destroyed by them and called together the leaders of his realm for an assembly to be held at Coudres, to where he also summoned the two warring princes.[2]

William then tells of how this assembly was held and an agreement reached which put a stop to the fight between Richard and Odo. Then Richard 'returned joyfully to his kings', that is to Olaf and Lacman who were still at Rouen. He 'rewarded them with gifts fitting for kings and allowed them permission to return home in triumph after they had promised to return to him whenever he was in need of their support'.

First, when did this fight or struggle with Count Odo of Blois really happen? The historiographical consensus is that it was in about 1013,[3] or, perhaps more nuanced, that it had been going on for a little while but culminated and ended in 1013 with the arrival at Rouen of Olaf and Lacman, the intervention of King Robert the Pious and the departure of the two chieftains,[4] but this date comes from some very circular reasoning and it may ultimately not be correct. In his 1892 'biography' of Odo II of Blois, Léonce Lex places all these events, the fight between Odo and Richard, the arrival of Olaf and Lacman and their eventual departure to the years 1006 and 1007, so 'c'est-à-dire à l'époque qui suivit immédiatement la mort de Mathilde'.[5] Arthur de La Borderie was of the opinion that all these events 'sont antérieurs à l'an mille'.[6] This might seem to be ruled out as William of Jumièges says the conflict between Odo and Richard was caused by Odo not giving back Mathilde's *dot*; and if Mathilde had died not

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[1] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed and trans. van Houts, V. 11, pp. 24-27.
[2] *Ibid*., V. 12, pp. 26-29.
[3] Cf. C. Pfister, *Études sur le règne de Robert le Pieux*, p. 215, n. 1; J.-F. Lemarignier, *Recherches sur l'hommage en marche et les frontières féodales* (Lille, 1945), pp 87-89; L. Musset, 'Une expédition d'une charte de Richard II (1014) pour la cathédrale de Chartres', *Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de Normandie*, LV (1959-1960), pp. 476-83, at p. 478; *idem*, 'Aux confins de la Normandie et du pays chartrain. I Peuplement et mise en valeur du plateau de Saint-André. II La frontière normande de l'Eure et de l'Avre', *Annuaire des cinq départements de la Normandie (149e congrès, Evreux)* (1991), pp. 81-87, at p. 86; P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182.
[4] C. Pfister, *Études sur le règne de Robert le Pieux*, pp. 212-15; J.-F. Lemarignier (*ibid.*) only follows Pfister's reconstruction.
[5] L. Lex, *Eudes, comte de Blois*, p. 12. L. Musset, 'Une expédition d'une charte de Richard II', argued against this view.
[6] A de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne,* vol. 3, p. 3.

long before 1005 (which itself is only an assumption made by some historians) then such a dating is ruled out; but this whole dossier is both complex and obscure and we should also note Olivier Guyotjeannin's sceptical observation: 'La réalité de ce don en dot, prétexte à une invasion normande, reste sujette à caution.'[1]

Let us now say a few words about William of Jumièges's story of Dol in Brittany being attacked.

We have seen Elisabeth van Houts's opinion above: coastal Brittany was attacked and Dol was captured, by Olaf Haraldsson it seems, 'some years before Olaf assisted the Danes in their invasion of England in 1009'. Pierre Bauduin follows the same line placing this attack on Dol in Brittany 'vers 1009',[2] although more recently he amends this to 'avant 1009'.[3] But let us strip out for the time being all the talk of Sigvatr's poem *Víkingarvísur*, what then are we then left with? Very little at all.

It is certainly true that William of Jumièges often conflated events at different dates involving different people to create some of his stories, and that his stories do not seem to follow any strict chronological order, but the suggestion that he did so here is only based on some heroic and unstated assumptions and interpretations from the 'evidence' of Sigvatr's verses. But there is no evidence that Olaf attacked Brittany 'some years before' he 'assisted the Danes in their invasion of England in 1009'. As we have seen it is very probable that Olaf was a very young participant in some of the 'Danish' attacks in England in these years (1009-1012), but placing this Olaf's attack in Brittany 'some years before' 1009 is just arbitrary. Indeed, there is also no evidence that Brittany was attacked at all by anyone 'some years before' 1009.

When one looks at what various historians have said about this attack on Dol-de-Bretagne they have proposed radically different opinions. Hubert Guillotel places the attack on Dol in 1014 without giving any justification,[4] he is followed in this by Neil Price.[5] Jean-Christophe Cassard has a most unusual take on these matters; without giving any references or arguments he transforms William of Jumièges's Olaf and Lacman (or Lagmann) into one person, 'Olaf Lagman', 'king of the Hebrides and of Ireland'. It was this character who apparently responded to an appeal of Richard duke of Normandy to come to his aid in 996 (note!), and who first

[1] O. Guyotjeannin, *Episcopus et comes : affirmation et déclin de la seigneurie épiscopale au nord du royaume de France : Beauvais-Noyon, Xe-début XIIIe siècle* (Geneva, 1987), p. 22, n. 96.
[2] P. Bauduin, *La première Normandie*, p. 182.
[3] Personal communication.
[4] A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois*, p. 402. But clearly following a very conventional interpretation of William of Jumièges.
[5] N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, p. 53/371.

landed near to Dol and then defeated the 'avoué' Salomon.[1] Cassard seems in some ways to be following the dating of Arthur de La Borderie here.[2] But then we are told of the 'last authentic Viking' to *fouler* Armorican soil, that is 'Olaf Haraldsson' the future Saint Olaf of Norway, in 1014, during a second (note!) attack on Dol. He then references and quotes Olaf's saga, meaning here Snorri Snurluson's *Óláfs saga Helga* in his so-called *Heimskringla* and Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* contained in it.[3] Although I find this interpretation rather unconvincing it is very intriguing nonetheless. It is to be regretted that Cassard did not explain any of his reasoning or from whom or where he may have got these ideas.[4]

But who is Cassard's ministerial official (*avoué*) Salomon meant to have been? The name Salomon given by William of Jumièges certainly points to a Breton, but who was he? We do not know.[5] But we can contrast this with Sigvatr's quite contrary statement in stanza 10 of his *Víkingarvísur* (as was cited and discussed earlier) that when Olaf Haraldsson took *Hóll* it was held by 'vikings', who as I have noted earlier may or may not have been other Scandinavians.[6] Nevertheless, Snorri Snurluson in his own very much later interpretation of this stanza says: 'But in the third spring King Aðalráðr [Æthelred] died. His sons Eaðmundr and Eaðvarðr took over the kingdom. Then King Óláfr travelled southwards over the sea and then he fought in Hringsfjǫrðr and stormed a castle at Hólarnir, which vikings were occupying. He demolished

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[1] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, p. 99. Although he does not say so Cassard's combining of Olaf and Lagman seems to ultimately and clearly derive from the late Irish *Cogadh Gaedhel Re Gallaibh* (*The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*). We will see later (and give the appropriate references) that the *Cogadh*, as well as the earlier and more reliable *Annals of Ulster*, give an 'Olaf son of Lagman' (respectively *Amlaíbh mac Lagmain* and *Amlaim mac Laghmaind*) amongst a list of those killed at the Battle of Clontarf in Ireland in 1014. But an earlier list in *Cogadh Gaedhel Re Gallaibh*, giving the leaders of the *Gall* (Scandinavian foreigners) before the battle, gives an *Amlaíb Lagmaind mac Gofraid* ('Amlaf [Olaf] Lagmund, son of Goffraidh' as James H. Todd translates this). Todd identified this person with the 'Olaf son of Lagman' found elsewhere but he took it as being a reference to a single person (cf. *Cogadh*, ed. and trans. J. H. Todd, pp. 271-72). But in Patrick Wadden's view, the fact that the genitive case ('*Lagmuind*' as Wadden says) is used shows that we are here dealing with a father and son: see P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', in V. McAlister and T. Barry (eds.), *Space and Settlement in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2015), pp. 15-33, at p. 30, nn. 13, 14; *idem*, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin XVI: proceedings of Clontarf 1014–2014: national conference marking the millennium of the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2017), pp. 144-69, at p. 163, and elsewhere. This, it seems to me, is where Cassard got the idea of an 'Olaf Lagman' from but it certainly does not explain his early dating.

[2] Cf. A de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne,* vol. 3, p. 3.

[3] J.-C. Cassard, *Le siècle des Vikings en Bretagne*, pp. 99-100.

[4] Unless I have missed some of his earlier arguments to this effect.

[5] This Salomon might certainly have been a distant descendant of the Breton duke or 'king' Salomon who was assassinated in 874, perhaps by the feminine line of his daughter Prostlon, but this is just an idea.

[6] See an earlier note in this chapter on whether *vikingr* always means Scandinavians. As well as others, J.-C. Cassard, 'Avant les Normands', p. 104, says that the saga of Olaf Haraldsson signals that he had 'engagé contre d'autres mercenaires retranchés sur la motte de Dol en 1014'. This not only chronologically wrongly equates Sigvatr's attack on *Hóll* and William of Jumièges's attack on Dol (which took place one year apart), but it also implicitly accepts that Sigvatr's 'vikings' and William's Salomon were one and the same and were 'mercenaries'; mercenaries of whom one could ask.

the castle.'[1] He then quotes Sigvatr's verse as proof. The 'in the third spring' seems to refer to Snorri's immediately preceding statement which says: 'King Óláfr stayed there [in England] on that occasion for three winters.'[2] But King Æthelred died in late April 1016, which, at least in Snorri's opinion, would place Olaf's departure 'southwards over the sea' to 'Hringsfjǫrðr' and 'a castle at Hólarnir' to after this. But if the general scholarly consensus that Olaf Haraldsson had returned to Norway by 1015 is correct then this cannot have been true.

That Sigvatr's *Hóll* was held by some 'vikings' whereas Dol was according to William of Jumièges held by a Breton guardian called Salomon immediately casts considerable doubt on the oft-suggested equation of these places. Subsequent historians seem to be trying to force, teleologically and perhaps by wishful thinking, Dol to equate with *Hóll*.

But there is a major chronological difficulty with the identification and van Houts's interpretation: in fact, and as was also discussed in the last section of this chapter, in terms of chronology if one follows the sequence of events in Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur*, and if one also wishes to equate Olaf's attack on *Hóll* and with Dol-de-Bretagne, and *Hringsfjǫrðr* perhaps with the nearby bay of Mont-Saint-Michel, and hence with William of Jumièges's story, which many historians do (including Elisabeth van Houts),[3] but which is debatable at the very least, then Olaf's attack in Hringsfjǫrðr and on Hóll is placed *immediately after* Olaf's supposed participation in Danish raids in England, usually placed between 1009 and 1012, but *before* his participation in raids into Aquitaine, and very debatably at least into northern Spain, which I date to the period 1012 to 1013. Thus, placing the undoubtedly real attack by Northmen on Dol 'some years before' 1009 as van Houts does is incoherent at the very least in terms of Olaf Haraldsson's supposed participation.

In general, the attempts of historians and saga/skaldic scholars to equate Dol and Hóll seem to me to be valiant, though perhaps misguided, attempts to force some very hazy square pegs into some equally vague round holes.

In my view Dol and Hóll may conceivably not have been the same place. But if they really were the same place then taking account of a reasonable chronology we would have to imagine a scenario which runs somewhat as follows: having left England in 1012 Olaf and the 'Danes' he was probably accompanying made an attack on Dol/Hóll immediately thereafter (in 1012), whoever was holding the place at the time, but when Olaf (and Lacman) were returning from

[1] *Heimskringla II*, p. 14.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[3] For example, J. Renaud, *Les Vikings et la Normandie*, p. 99, simply asserts that *Hringsfjǫrðr* is the 'fjord en rond', that is the bay of Mont-Saint-Michel, and that *Hóll* is Dol.

poitevin Aquitaine/the Loire the next year (1013) they also attacked the same place again, this time being held by the Breton Salomon.

In my opinion the story told by William of Jumièges of Richard II calling for assistance from Olaf and Lacman and of their attacks on coastal Brittany and on Dol, and its chronology, should probably be interpreted in one of two not too different ways:

First, and this is essentially Alistair Campbell's interpretation,[1] the attacks on coastal Brittany and on Dol by Olaf and Lacman could likely have preceded Richard's call for assistance and did not come afterwards as implied by William of Jumièges. In the tussle with Odo of Blois-Chartres the Bretons were on the side of Richard II not Odo.[2] In these circumstances it is rather 'absurd', Campbell argued, to imagine Richard first directing his newly acquired mercenaries to attack coastal Brittany and then Breton Dol, clearly held by a Breton guardian called Salomon. On the other hand, we 'know', at least from Sigvatr's poem, that Olaf (and probably Lacman) had been 'ravaging up and down the coast',[3] and after having left Poitou/the Loire they had made attacks in Brittany and then on the citadel of Dol on their way back northwards, probably all later in 1013. It was possibly at some point during this typical 'viking' coastal raiding that Richard heard about them and sent his messengers to enlist their help.

Second, a slight variant on this is that Richard's messengers had reached Olaf and Lacman when they were still in the Poitou/Loire region and then on their way to the Seine they could not resist making attacks in Brittany, which perhaps fits a little better with William's implicit but always vague chronology. But whichever it was of these two options does not make much difference.

Alternatively, and this is essentially Pierre Bauduin's idea, for which I thank him, it is not out of the question that Salomon could have been an opponent of the young Alan III, whose father (Geoffrey Bérenger, count of Rennes and duke of Brittany) had died in 1008,[4] and that Richard had employed Olaf and Lacman to dislodge him from Dol. Bauduin says: 'C'est une pure hypothèse mais cela permettrait de comprendre que ce parti breton soit qualifié de

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[1] See *Encomium Emmae*, p. 77, n. 2.
[2] At least according to Alistair Campbell.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] I cannot explore this family and political complex in detail here; but Alan III's mother was Richard II's sister Hawisa/Havoise. When Geoffrey died Hawisa/Havoise exercised the regency and Richard became Alan's guardian/tutor. See to start with J. Quaghebeur, 'Havoise, Constance et Mathilde, princesses de Normandie et duchesses de Bretagne', in J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge. Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008), pp. 145-64, esp. pp. 147-48; A. Chédeville and N.-Y. Tonnerre, *La Bretagne féodale*, *XIe–XIIIe siècle* (Rennes, 1987), p. 37; S. Morin, *Trégor, Goëlo, Penthièvre. Le pouvoir des comtes de Bretagne du XIe au XIIIe siècle* (Rennes, 2010), pp. 39-100.

« vikings » dans un sens d'un groupe hostile à Olaf (et au duc de Normandie).'[1] I have nothing against the 'pure hypothesis' of the Breton Salomon being a possible opponent of Alain III and thereby also of his mother and uncle Richard too, and even that Olaf and Lacman's attack on Dol could be explained in this way. But the 'vikings' hypothesis idea is only really necessary if we assume that Sigvatr's Hóll and William of Jumiéges's Dol are referring to the same place which is not clear at all, and as noted before even if they were the same place these two attacks took place about a year apart: one in 1012 and the other in 1013.

Yet whatever the case may have been regarding the attack on Dol, Olaf and Lacman did eventually come to the Seine and to Rouen where they were received with honour befitting kings. But their military help was never required because when King Robert 'the Pious' heard about the attacks in Brittany ('the shameless behaviour of the heathens towards the Bretons'), and also of Duke Richard having then hired the same chieftains responsible for his fight with Count Odo (he 'had summoned them to punish Count Odo's disobedience'), he intervened, held an assembly at Coudres with Richard and Odo and the fight was over. After returning from Coudres 'joyfully to his kings' - Olaf and Lacman - it was then that Richard 'rewarded them with gifts fitting for kings and allowed them permission to return home', although supposedly obtaining their promise to come back if ever Richard was 'in need of their help'. It is then too that Olaf was supposedly baptised by Richard's brother Archbishop Robert. The 'gifts fitting for kings' given to Olaf and Lacman look very much like a payment, perhaps even demanded by the two chieftains then or previously, to get rid of them from the Seine now that they were no longer needed.

More thoughts on Olaf and Lacman

Almost all historians, both saga/skaldic scholars and others, who have ever considered these events equate William of Jumièges's Olaf with a young Olaf Haraldsson in his early 'viking' phase, although as will be touched on below this is not a completely uncontested view. So let us start by inquiring about Lacman. That Lacman was really a 'king of the Swedes' has been doubted for a long time. Jean Adigard des Gautries argued that *Suauorum* should be emended to *Sudrorum* thus identifying him as a king of the Hebrides or the Isles.[2] This is an idea that has

[1] Personal communication.
[2] J. Adigard des Gautries, *Les Noms de personnes scandinaves en Normandie de 911 à 1066*, *Nomina Germanica*, 11 (Lund, 1954), p. 69, n. 12.

been accepted by many historians ever since.[1] To cite Clare Downham:

> Support for this theory comes from the name. Lagmann is derived from the Old Norse *lögmaðr* ('lawman'). This name was used in the Northern Isles and Hebrides from the tenth century, but it is not attested in Scandinavia.[2] According to 'The Annals of Ulster' and *Cogad Gaedel re Gallaib*, Óláfr son of Lagmann fought at Clontarf in 1014, alongside a contingent of warriors from the Hebrides. James Henthorn Todd identified Lagmann as a son of Guðrøðr, a descendant of Ívarr[3] and king of the Isles who died in 989. This argument supports the theory that Lagmann ruled the Hebrides and Man in the early eleventh century.[4]

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[1] See for example: E. van Houts, *GND*, pp. xxxv, li, and p. 20, n. 1; C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 133-34, 197; *eadem*, 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century': *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 26 (2003), pp 55-73, at pp. 60-61; L. Musset, 'Aux confins de la Normandie et du pays chartrain', *Annuaire des cinq départements de la Normandie, Congrès d'Évreux* (1991), pp. 81-87, at p. 86; P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', pp. 30-31, *idem*, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', p. 161; B. Hudson, *Viking Pirates*, pp. 76-77, 130, 133; S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, p. 184. Contrary to this, in Colmán Etchingham's opinion Olaf son of Lagmann was not an Isleman, 'the son or grandson of Gofraid mac Arailt', but rather, if he 'is not merely an accretion from later "tradition"', then he was likely 'a Dublin royal': C. Etchingham, 'Clontarf 1014: military significance, external dimension and outcome', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin XVI: proceedings of Clontarf 1014–2014: national conference marking the millennium of the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2017), pp. 122-43, at pp. 128-29 and n. 23. See also the long footnote below.

[2] As Pierre Bauduin observes (pers. comm): 'Lacman serait de ce point de vue représentatif des navires venant de l'*Iresca regione* dont parle Adémar, c'est-à-dire des groupes qui dominent les régions riveraines [neighbouring regions] de la mer d'Irlande et qui, éventuellement, interviennent en Irlande et en Grande-Bretagne.'

[3] It has been argued by Benjamin Hudson that Lagmann and his father Guðrøðr/Godfrey the son of Harald (*Gofraid mac Arailt*) were not descendants of Ívarr (via 'Harald of Limerick' who died in 940), but were rather descended from the so-called but misnamed 'Harald of Bayeux'; for which see B. Hudson, *Viking Pirates*, esp. pp. 56-74. I discussed this briefly in an earlier chapter, but the precise immediate ancestry/genealogy of *Gofraid mac Arailt* is of no real relevance to our concerns here.

[4] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 133 and notes. This is taken from her earlier article 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century', p. 61, where she adds: 'Thus two independent lines of scholarship serve to identify Lagmann as a king of the Hebrides and Man in the early eleventh century. Nevertheless, his career has been neglected by historians.' In C. Etchingham's opinion however: 'Neither AU for 1014, nor any plausibly contemporary source for Clontarf, make reference to participation in that battle by Manx-Hebrideans, as distinct from the Orcadians of Jarl Sigurðr**,** which is an entirely different matter. The affiliations of Amlaíb (mac) Lagmaind are not disclosed in AU, but *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib*, in its two slightly contradictory references to this character, categorically *do not* identify him as a Manx-Hebridean, but quite unequivocally as one of the Dublin 'royals'. See Todd's edition, pp. 164-5, §94, where *Amlaíb Lagmaind mac Gophrai*d is one of *cethri rígdomna Gall* 'four "qualified to be king" of the Foreigners' (that is, in this as in many other contexts, of the Dublin 'Foreigners'; two of the others named are indisputably members of the Dublin dynasty). My translation of an expression that means literally 'king material' is preferable to Todd's anachronistic 'crown princes'. At pp. 206-7, §117 of Todd's edition, *Amlaibh mac Lagman* is numbered among the 2,000 slain *do Gallaibh Átha Cliath* 'of the Foreigners of Dublin'. The burden of these identificatory remarks in the actual text of *Cogad* was ignored in Todd's identification (followed by Downham and Patrick Wadden [for whom see below]) of this character as a son of Gothbrith mac Arailt, king of the Isles (d. 989) (on pp. 271-2 of Todd's edition). There is, then, no 'argument' here that 'supports the theory that Lagman ruled the Hebrides and Man in the early eleventh century,' as Downham puts it.' Elsewhere (pers. comm.) Etchingham says: 'There is no doubt that Lagmann as a personal name is a peculiarity of the 'Norwegian Insular Viking zone', as I call it, so he cannot have been from Scandinavia itself. While *lagmainn* […] - common noun 'lawmen', probably here as much sheriff-like enforcers as legal experts - participated in Manx-Hebridean expeditions to Ireland in 962 (AFM 960) and 974 (AFM 972 = AI for 974), it cannot be assumed that the occurrence of the word (in its oblique case) as a personal name necessarily points to an origin in the Isles. Another Lagmann was a son of Godred Crovan / Gofraid Méránach, king of Man, the Isles

And she also states:

> It is not certain who ruled the Isles at the time of the battle of Clontarf. However, king Lagmann, who had been active in northern France, is a strong candidate. This link is suggested by the subsequently reported death of Óláfr son of Lagmann at the battle of Clontarf. William of Jumièges stated that Lagmann worked as a mercenary in England and Normandy[1] shortly before the battle of Clontarf, so he may have been a king living in exile. It is possible that, after the death of Rögnvaldr Guðrøðsson in Munster in 1005, Brian Bóruma expelled Lagmann in an attempt to bring the kingdom of Man and the Isles fully under his own control.[2]

Patrick Wadden also clearly identifies Lacman/Lagmann as being the brother and successor of 'Ragnall mac Gofraid', Downham's ON Rögnvaldr Guðrøðsson: 'Lacman/Lagmann, whom Knútr sought out for assistance, appears to have been the brother, and probably the successor, of Ragnall mac Gofraid who died as king of the Isles in 1005.'[3] The *Gofraid* here refers to *Gofraid mac Arailt* (ON Guðrøðr Haraldsson) the king of the Hebrides who died in *Dál Riata* (in western Scotland) in 989.[4] Referring to Olaf and Lagmann's assistance given to Richard I of Normandy against Count Odo and to their response to Cnut's call for help in England,[5] Patrick Wadden says regarding the former: 'For Lagmann, this possibly reflected the

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and briefly Dublin (d. 1095). He was *mac maic Arailt* (AT 1091.5) and so a son or nephew of Ímar mac Arailt king of Dublin 1038-46 (d. 1054) who, in turn was nephew of Sitriuc of Clontarf fame. This Lagmann, therefore, was definitely of the Dublin branch of the descendants of Ímar, so there is no particular reason to doubt that Amlaíb mac Lagmainn, killed at Clontarf, was a Dublin 'royal', as *Cogad* claims.' I leave these tricky matters for these historians to continue to debate, but for our purposes in this chapter whether Lagmann and his son Olaf were from the Hebrides/Isle of Man or were 'Dublin royals' does not really matter much if William of Jumièges's Lacman is to be identified with the father of this Olaf killed at Clontarf, an issue to which we shall return below.

[1] The 'England' part of this refers to another story told by William of Jumièges which is discussed immediately below.

[2] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 197; also p. 15. See also B. T. Hudson, *Kings of Celtic Scotland* (Westport, CT, 1994), p. 113. C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) comments that 'this line of speculation is rendered superfluous by my analysis of the Manx-Hebridean branch of the descendants of Ímar, its precise genealogical connection with the branch dominant at Dublin since the reign of Amlaíb Cúarán (d. 980), and its good relations with Brian Bóraime's dynasty from the 980s if not the 970s, and extending into the era of Brian's son Donnchad down to the 1060s. There is no reason to suppose that Brian Bóraime would have wanted to expel 'Lagmann', even if the latter were king of Man and the Hebrides after Ragnall mac Gothbrith's demise in 1005'.

[3] P. Wadden, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', p. 162. C. Etchingham (pers. comm.): 'The trouble with Patrick Wadden's analysis is that it proceeds from the same unwarranted assumption of Downham, namely that Lacman/Lagman (and of course Amlaíb mac Lagmuind) was a Manx-Hebridean, when this is belied by the only thing approaching contemporary evidence, the statements of *Cogad*. Wadden […] also shares the common misapprehension that the Manx-Hebridean branch of the descendants of the ninth-century Ímar were so descended through an Aralt mac Sitriuc, a king of Limerick (d. 940). While I shared that misapprehension twenty years ago, I have since shown that it is not so and they were otherwise descended from Ímar.'

[4] For *Gofraid mac Arailt* and his career see P. Wadden, *ibid*., pp. 151-57.

[5] See immediately below.

continuation of his father's [Gofraid mac Arailt's] relationship with the rulers of Normandy.'[1] Similarly, Benjamin Hudson says that Lagmann was 'Ragnall Godfreysson's brother' and that 'Lagmann, son of Godfrey Haraldsson, succeeded his brother, Ragnall, as King of the Isles in 1005.'[2]

But William of Jumièges also talks of Olaf and Lacman earlier in his work, a fact that is rarely mentioned. He says after mentioning the flight of Æthelred and his wife and some of his children to Normandy[3] - in late 1013 to early 1014:

> Then Svein was struck by a sudden illness and died while dealing with the kingdom's affairs at London. After Svein's burial his son Cnut took over command, and with great vigour built up the army and used all his efforts to enlarge his forces so that his men would not withdraw from a second expedition. He sent messengers to seek the support of two kings, Lacman of the Swedes and Olaf of the Norsemen.[4] They came to his assistance with their combined armies, greatly increasing the overall strength of his military force. In the meantime, Æthelred prepared everything in order to sail to his kingdom with his wife, leaving his sons Edward and Alfred behind with their uncle.[5]

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[1] For this (very debatable to say the least) earlier relationship of *Gofraid mac Arailt* with the rulers of Normandy see P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', pp. 20-30; *idem*, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', esp. pp. 156 and 162. Without wishing to enter into this matter in detail here, Wadden's claim of an earlier relationship between *Gofraid mac Arailt* and Richard I going back to 991 is based on a particular reading of a treaty made in 991 between Richard I and King Æthelred of England at the instigation of Pope John XV, plus, and this is important, a residual and unwarranted belief in some of Dudo of Saint-Quentin's stories. P. Bauduin, 'La papauté, les Vikings et les relations anglo-normandes: autour du traité de 991', has analysed these events in detail without bringing in any connection with *Gofraid mac Arailt* or the Isles. In Etchingham's opinion (pers. comm.) Wadden's idea is just an 'academic sleight of hand'. Readers can review the evidence for themselves.

[2] B. Hudson, *Viking Pirates*, pp. 76-77. Hudson's take on these matters concerning Olaf and Lagmann (*ibid*., pp 76-77) is, however, somewhat lacking. Although admitting that the 'chronology is not entirely clear' he says that both Olaf and Lagmann 'seem to have fought for Richard II in two campaigns. The first an invasion of Brittany in 1009 [Yes!], while the second was an attack on Odo of Blois-Chartres in a campaign that began in the fall of 1013 and lasted until the following spring'. But as we have seen elsewhere there is no evidence at all for any 'invasion of Brittany' in 1009. Hudson's view is probably influenced by Eleanor Searle's *Predatory Kinship* (at pp. 137-38) which is the only reference he gives here. He also says, 'Olaf was certainly in Normandy in 1014, but at that time he was an ally of Æthelred, although previously he had fought for Svein'. The idea that Olaf had earlier fought for Swein is highly debatable. When and in what circumstances had this taken place?

[3] In William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, V. 7, pp. 18-19.

[4] Actually 'Lacman equidem Suauorum et Olauum Noricorum'.

[5] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, V. 8, pp. 18-21. Adam of Bremen identified the Olaf who assisted Cnut as being the son of 'Craccaben' (that is Olaf Tryggvason): see Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, book 2, li (49), p. 90. This is corrected by F. J. Tschan (*ibid*., p. 90, n. 178), as meaning 'Olaf the Saint, the son of a Harold Grenske of the line of Harold Fairhair', which latter point is itself also a complete assumption. Van Houts (*GND*, p. 10, n. 6) says: 'A similar, though again more elaborated account, of the recruitment can be found in the *Encomium*, pp. 18-20.' I do not think the *Encomium Emmae* really does this; readers can judge for themselves.

Although this appears in the flow of William's *GND* before the discussion of Olaf and Lacman being at Rouen it is quite explicitly referring to events immediately after Swein Forkbeard's death on 3 February 1014.[1] The precise chronology here needs some exploration. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us after Swein's death at the beginning of February 1014 'the fleet chose Cnut for king' after which he 'settled with his raiding army in Gainsborough until Easter'.[2] Here 'the people in Lindsey came to an agreement with him that they should provide him with horses and afterwards all go together and raid',[3] implicitly in England. But 'during that spring Æthelred came home to his own people', and 'before they [Cnut's forces] were ready, King Æthelred came there with the whole army into Lindsey, and then all human kind that could be got at were raided and burned and killed. Cnut himself went out with his fleet - and thus the wretched people were betrayed through him - and then turned southwards until he came to Sandwich, and there put ashore the hostages which were granted to his father,[4] and cut off their hands and noses'.[5]

We then hear nothing more of Cnut in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* until 1015 when he reappears in England, at Sandwich again.[6] According to John of Worcester Cnut left England

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[1] Swein Forkbeard died on 3 February 1014 according to *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MSS D and E. For his death see also *Encomium Emmae*, p. 18; R. Holtzmann (ed.), *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon. Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, *MGH*, *SRG*, 9 (Berlin, 1935), p. 446; L. Demidoff, 'The death of Sven Forkbeard - in reality and later tradition', *Mediaeval Scandinavia*, 11 (1978/79), pp. 30-47; P. H. Sawyer, 'Swein Forkbeard and the Historians', in I. Wood and G. A. Loud (eds.), *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages. Essays presented to John Taylor* (London 1991), pp. 27-40; T. Bolton, *Cnut the Great* (New Haven and London, 2017), p. 71. C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 134, says: 'William of Jumièges reports that, *after* [my emphasis] Lagmann and Óláfr assisted Cnut, Richard, duke of Normandy, sought their help against his enemy Odo, count of Chartres. Nevertheless, the Capetian ruler Robert II intervened to arrange a peace between the two sides. Lagmann and Óláfr were presented with gifts and persuaded to return to their own countries.' This order is also found in *eadem,* 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century', p. 61. P. Wadden follows Downham's chronology: 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', p. 162. I disagree with Downham's and Wadden's chronological interpretation here which seems to be implicitly based just on the order these things appear in the *GND*. We have seen that it is most likely that Olaf and Lacman came to assist Richard II (in say late 1013) and stayed at Rouen until early 1014, after which if we are to believe William of Jumièges they went to England at Cnut's request.

[2] *ASC s.a.* 1014, ed. and trans. Swanton, pp. 144-45.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] *Ibid*. John of Worcester says that the hostages lost their hands and ears, and had their nostrils slit: See *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 450–1066*, vol. 2, eds. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. J. Bray and P. McGurk (Oxford, 1995), pp. 476-48.

[6] *ASC* E *s.a.* 1015, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 146. M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: England's Viking King, 1016-35*, p. 27, interprets this all as meaning that: 'Before returning to Denmark [implicitly in 1014], Cnut 'touched at Sandwich to put ashore hostages given to his father, having first cut off their hands, ears and noses', but then that in 'September 1015' Cnut 'appears off Sandwich again, to initiate fourteen months of campaigning, largely against *Æthelred'*s son Edmund Ironside […]'. The return to Denmark and the date of 'September'1015 for his return to Sandwich is all based on John of Worcester's later interpretation.

after September 1014[1] when 'he set out for Denmark returning the following year'.[2] But whilst all Cnut's movements can, and often have been, examined and debated regarding the years 1014 to 1016, our concern here is with William of Jumièges's account of how Olaf and Lacman had responded to Cnut's call for reinforcements, or perhaps better said mercenaries, apparently immediately after his father Swein Forkbeard's death and burial in February 1014.[3]

It was shown earlier in the discussion of skaldic verse that Óttarr the Black (Óttarr *svarti*) in his so-called *Hǫfuðlausn* ('Head-ransom') wrote a stanza supposedly telling of how Olaf had helped King Æthelred regain his kingdom, which is usually interpreted as meaning in the spring of 1014 after his short refuge with his brother-in-law Richard II in Rouen, and after the death of Cnut's father Swein Forkbeard in early February. As I commented on in the discussion of this stanza, whilst there are reasons we might want to query its historicity and the later interpretations made of it, the idea of Olaf returning to England with Æthelred does have a certain logic not least because if we accept that Olaf and Lacman were in Normandy with Richard over the period of late 1013 to early 1014, and we know that Æthelred was there from

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[1] John of Worcester, *ibid*. The *ASC* E *s.a.* 1014, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 145, says in full: 'Then during that spring King Æthelred came home to his own people, and he was gladly received by them all. And then, after Swein was dead, Cnut settled with his raiding-army in Gainsborough until Easter, and the people of Lindsey came to an agreement with him that they should provide him with horses and afterwards all go together and raid. Then, before they were ready, King Æthelred came there with the whole army into Lindsey, and then all human kind that could be got at were raided and burned and killed. Cnut himself went out with his fleet - and thus the wretched people were betrayed through him – and then turned southwards until he came to Sandwich, and there put ashore the hostages which were granted to his father, and cut off their hands and their noses.' For no apparent reason E. van Houts (*GND*, p. 19, n. 5) would have Cnut returning to Denmark in April 1014. Which seems only to be based on the report on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that Cnut was at Gainsborough until Easter as just quoted above. But, intriguingly, the Anglo-Saxon chronicler then says (*ibid*): 'And besides all these evils, the king ordered the raiding-army that lay at Greenwich to be paid 21 thousand pounds.' John of Worcester makes this amount thirty thousand pounds. This payment seems to have been the wages of Thorkell the Tall and his men, still at Greenwich, but 'some may have gone to Olaf, though perhaps not very much', because 'according to Óttar *svarti*, he had only two ships with him on this expedition'; see A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 128.

[2] John of Worcester, *ibid*., T. Bolton, *Cnut the Great*, p. 73, says, after mentioning the cutting off of the hostages' hands, ears and noses, that (Cnut's) 'fleet turned eastwards to the open sea, and returned to Denmark', with no reference being given, but clearly borrowing from John of Worcester.

[3] E. van Houts, 'Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century', p. 119, says emphatically: 'This is not true.' Because, she says: 'Chronologically it is absolutely impossible for Olaf to have been able to accompany Cnut to or in England because in the course of the year 1014 Olaf had returned to Norway.' The only evidence for this dismissal is a reference to Alistair Campbell's edition of the *Encomium Emmae* (pp. 79-80), who suggests, she says, 'that already during Olaf's lifetime people confused Olaf's early career at the side of Thorkill in 1009-11 with the campaign of Cnut three years later […] Campbell concludes that early Norse confusion is to be blamed for the mistake made by the skalds, William of Jumièges and Adam of Bremen […]. I would like to argue that, with regard to Olaf's career, William of Jumièges, together with the skaldic poets, represents the Scandinavian not the English point of view'. She then argues that it was possible that when Sigvatr and his friend Berg visited Normandy in 1025-26 (an issue I will not address here) 'they might possibly have told their version of the story of Olaf's Viking career, a version which might have lingered on in Normandy until the time of William of Jumièges'. I tend to doubt this particular 'Scandinavian influence in Norman literature', but if it were so then why does William of Jumièges tell of Olaf and Lacman coming to the help of Cnut in England (in 1014), and say nothing of Olaf helping Æthelred to regain his throne, supposedly in the same year, a story which Sigvatr himself does not mention at all, but which is only contained in a very difficult to interpret verse of the skald Óttarr the Black?

mid-January 1014 and was still there when Swein Forkbeard died on 3 February 1014 before returning to England in Lent (16 March to 24 April), then this could have been the occasion when Æthelred met Richard's now redundant mercenary Olaf (and Lacman it should be said), and Olaf (and possibly Lacman) had found a new employer for their services. But if this were so what are we to make of William of Jumièges's story that in fact after Swein's death Olaf and Lacman had been hired as mercenary reinforcements by Cnut, via messengers that he had sent (supposedly to Normandy)? The two propositions are, or seem to be, completely mutually exclusive.[1] It has sometimes been pointed out that Olaf was Cnut's enemy and thus him selling his services to Æthelred perhaps makes more sense; but this idea seems to come from later events back in Scandinavia. Prior to 1014 there is no evidence that Olaf was in any way an enemy of Cnut.

If these matters concerning the years 1013 and 1014 in England and Normandy are not already highly complicated and difficult enough to interpret, there is also the issue of the treaty William of Jumièges says was concluded between Swein and Duke Richard II.[2] There have been two chronological opinions about this over the years. Traditionally this treaty was dated to 1003 and placed in connection with the St. Brice's Day massacre in England in 1002. But more recently it is more often placed in 1013 at the time Swein led an invasion of England.[3] Pierre Bauduin has recently written a very thorough and insightful paper on the matter of this treaty: its contents, its dating and the likely context. Bauduin's conclusion is that a dating to 1013 is *la plus vraisemblable*.[4] But here as elsewhere he also dates the arrival in Normandy of Olaf and Lacman to 1013 (relating to Richard's fight with Count Odo of Blois-Chartres) and their departure to 1014, and he also accepts the now prevalent view that the stanza of Óttarr the Black in his so-called *Hǫfuðlausn* ('Head-ransom'), as already discussed, indicates that Olaf had supported or accompanied Æthelred in his return to England in the spring of 1014 after his brief sojourn in Rouen. Although Pierre Bauduin allows all this complexity and simultaneity, he does not address William of Jumièges's story about Cnut sending messengers, to Normandy no doubt, to try to enlist Olaf and Lacman into his force immediately after the death of his father Swein in early February 1014, and these chieftains then coming to him in England before his precipitous retreat to Denmark.[5] Maybe this is because such an event at the specific time

[1] This is, of course, unless William's Olaf was not actually the young Olaf Haraldsson.
[2] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, V. 7, pp. 18-19.
[3] Swein started his 'invasion' of England in August 1013.
[4] P. Bauduin, '*Quasi in domo propria sub securitate sanaretur*: a peace agreement between king Sven Forkbeard and duke Richard II of Normandy'.
[5] For his 'precipitous retreat', see A. Williams, *Æthelred the Unready*, p. 127.

indicated by William of Jumièges would seem to contradict the belief that Olaf (at least) had helped Æthelred regain his English throne *at the same time*.[1] However, the nature of the treaty between Swein and Richard (which Bauduin and others place in 1013) included, to cut a long story short, the provisions that 'if the kings of the Danes and the dukes of Normandy as well as their heirs in the future would maintain permanent peace, the Danes would sell their booty in Normandy. If a Dane were ill or wounded and in need of friends' help, he would be securely looked after by the Normans as if he were at home'.[2] Why we could ask, perhaps rhetorically, is it impossible that the envoys of Swein's son Cnut had not reached Normandy perhaps even with the intention of asking Richard to honour the terms of the treaty made the year before with Swein and for his 'heirs'? Richard may well have declined to get involved in the ongoing struggle for hegemony in England, particularly perhaps because his brother-in-law Æthelred was still with him at Rouen, but whilst the messengers were in Rouen they could very likely have met Olaf and Lacman (whether or not Cnut had previously known they were there) and induced or incentivised them to come to England to help Cnut. From the evidence we have (and this is only from William of Jumièges) it seems that in the early months of 1014 Richard was likely very keen to get rid of the now redundant mercenaries he had induced to come to Rouen, and subsequently paid handsomely.

Whether or not Richard knew where Olaf and Lacman had then headed to, they (or at least Olaf) had in fact gone to England. I tend to think that the scenario described by William of Jumièges is at least as likely (but one might say no more likely) as the idea, based purely on a particular interpretation of Óttarr the Black's stanza, that Olaf had accompanied Æthelred back to England. One could of course try to construct an elaborate and complex scenario which attempts to reconcile the contradictory evidence of William of Jumièges and Óttarr**'s** stanza but this would be difficult and pure speculation. If William of Jumièges's treaty between Swein and Richard II of Normandy had really been agreed upon in 1013 and not in 1003, which is perhaps now the generally favoured opinion, then William of Jumièges's assertion that, seemingly in 1014, Richard's mercenaries Olaf and Lacman had responded to a call from Swein's son Cnut to help him in England would make a certain sense.[3]

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[1] P. Bauduin (pers. comm.) says: 'Cela vient plutôt confirmer l'idée d'une grande volatilité de la situation diplomatique en ces années 1013-1014.' Bauduin tells me this missing report from William of Jumièges will be discussed in the final published version of his forthcoming article in *Early Medieval Europe*.

[2] William of Jumièges, *GND*, ed. and trans. van Houts, V. 7, pp. 18-19. For a fuller discussion and interpretation of this treaty see P. Bauduin, *ibid*.

[3] There is a lot of literature on the question of Olaf's early life and his relationships with both Æthelred and Cnut, most of which is in Norwegian or Swedish. The most recent and thorough work which argues for the view that Olaf did help Æthelred return to England from Normandy in early 1014 and subsequently became his ally is O. Tveito, 'Olav Haraldssons unge år og relasjonen til engelsk kongemakt. Momenter til et crux interpretum',

Leaving these most tricky questions to one side, and anticipating a little, later on we will look at a possible connection between Aquitanian, Norman and other matters, and the famous Battle of Clontarf in Ireland in late April 1014. But 'our' Lacman/Lagmann certainly had a son called Olaf who died during this battle.[1] If we accept that William of Jumièges's Olaf was a young Olaf Haraldsson, as most historians do, including myself at the end of the day, then from a chronological point of view if Olaf (Haraldsson) and Lacman/Lagmann left Normandy for England pretty quickly after Swein's death and burial in February 1014 (which William of Jumièges suggests they did), and likely even before Cnut moved on to Gainsborough by Easter (see *ASC s.a.* 1014), then bearing in mind that the Battle of Clontarf took place on 23 April 1014[2] there is nothing in the record to exclude the possibility that Lacman/Lagmann's son Olaf had not hitherto been with his father and then moved 'home' to Ireland to fight and die at Clontarf. Olaf Haraldsson on the other hand then returned to Scandinavia in late 1014 or in 1015. But what was Lacman's/Lagmann's fate, particularly bearing in mind that his own son called Olaf apparently died during the Battle of Clontarf in Ireland in late April 1014? Benjamin Hudson says after mentioning Olaf's death at Clontarf: 'The deaths within a year of Lagmann Godfreyson in Normandy and his son Olaf at the Battle of Clontarf had left the Isles without a suitable leader. […].'[3] After my querying Lagmann's death 'in Normandy' Hudson wrote to me:

Collegium Medievale, 21 (2008), pp. 158-81. On the other side, supporting Olaf's relationship with Cnut, is O. Moberg, *Olav Haraldsson, Knut den mektige och Sverige. Studier i Olav den heliges förhållande till de nordiska grannländerna* (Lund/Copenhagen, 1941), pp. 25-87, supported by S. Bagge, 'King, and Saint: The Medieval Histories about St. Óláfr Haraldsson', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 109. 3 (2010), pp. 281-321, esp. p. 288. So even in Scandinavian scholarly circles there is still much debate and disagreement on this question.

[1] The references for all this will be given later. C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: 'If the battle casualty was a Dublin 'royal', the assumption that either he or his father had any Manx-Hebridean connection is seriously undermined. One might or might not then want to argue, instead, that 'your' Lacman/Lagman is no more likely to have come to northern France from the Isles as from Dublin itself.'

[2] This dating is not completely sure. C. Etchingham points out: 'The date of Good Friday is in the *Chronicon* of Marianus Scotus, written at Fulda 1172x1182, in *Orkneyinga saga*, the earliest version of which *might* date to as early as the late twelfth century, and in the thirteenth-century *Njáls saga*. It also occurs right at the end of the elaborate account of the battle in *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib*, an account for which we have only the latest (seventeenth-century) manuscript of the text, and in a fashion that might suggest a late addition, and not a part of the original. In any event, I and colleagues suggested that the Good Friday motif might derive from a Manx or Hebridean source - Etchingham *et al*., *Norse-Gaelic contacts in a Viking world* (Turnhout, 2019), pp. 200, 252. Seán Duffy, *Brian Boru*, pp. 215-18, gives credence to the nineteenth-century reconstruction of the tidal sequence at Clontarf in April 1014, which has long been used to bolster the Good Friday date, but that reconstruction is mistaken, removing any presumption that Brian's death on Good Friday is anything other than part of the quasi-sanctification of Brian as martyr-king, a motif rather popular in post-conversion Scandinavia, doubtless explaining its occurrence in the *Brjáns saga incorporated in *Njáls saga*.' Fair enough, but when in the 'spring' of 1014 did the battle take place?

[3] B. T. Hudson, *Viking Pirates*, p. 132.

> In hindsight, I can see that it is a bit confusing. I was working backwards, beginning with the uneventful establishment of Hakon of Lade in the kingdom of the Isles by St. Olaf [in]1015. That would not have happened if Lagman were still alive at that time; at the very least there would have been some reaction. Lagman would have been an old man by the standards of the day in order to have an adult (so to say) son fighting at Clontarf in 1014. Since the Irish or British records are unaware of Lagman's demise, my interpretation is that he had died in Normandy just before the occupancy of Hakon. The quiet transition argues for a vacancy that Olaf used to get rid of a noble who was a threat, but too powerful to confront. A Norwegian king planting a noble in the Isles was done again in the early twelfth century when King Sigurd Magnusson installed a Norwegian noble in the Isles as his representative while Godred Crovan's son Olaf was too young to rule.[1]

Leaving aside the interesting but dubious and much contested statement that 'Hakon of Lade' was established by 'St. Olaf' in 1015, which is based solely on the late Norwegian synoptic history *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum* ('A Synopsis of the Sagas of the Kings of Norway') written in about 1190, I would just refer once again to the fact that according to William of Jumièges both Lacman and Olaf briefly became mercenaries for Cnut in England sometime, probably quickly, after Sven's death in February 1014. So, if (and it is certainly a big 'if') Lacman/Lagmann died around this time his death was perhaps more likely to have occurred in England rather than in Normandy.

We might also here bring up the question of whether William's Olaf really was Olaf Haraldsson as assumed by so many historians and saga scholars, including Benjamin Hudson throughout his study *Viking Pirates*.

The following short discussion of this question is basically just playing devil's advocate. If Lacman/Lagmann really was a 'king' the Isles in the early eleventh century, perhaps even being a mercenary 'king in exile' in France (Normandy) and England after being expelled from Ireland by Brian Bóruma after 1005, which I think he could well have been,[2] how and where had he met up with *Olauum Noricorum* if this Olaf was actually Olaf Haraldsson the future Saint Olaf of the sagas? From a historiographical perspective Clare Downham was probably being somewhat heretical or at least iconoclastic to suggest in a footnote in her book *Viking Kings* that perhaps it could be that 'William of Jumièges misidentified this character [Olaf]',

[1] Personal communication.
[2] Or even if maybe he was just another Dublin chieftain as argued for by Etchingham.

adding that 'it is surprising that, if Óláfr Haraldsson was the Óláfr baptised in Rouen, there is so little evidence for his cult in Normandy'.[1] But this is an excellent point. One could additionally ask, rather rhetorically perhaps: If William of Jumièges's Olaf was Olaf Haraldsson not only why is there 'so little evidence for his cult in Normandy' but also why do his skalds Sigvatr and Óttarr mention nothing at all about a visit of Olaf Haraldsson to Normandy where supposedly he not only helped Duke Richard II (or more probably was just ready to do so) against Count Odo, but was also baptised at Rouen by Richard's brother Archbishop Robert? If Olaf Haraldsson had done all these things, then Sigvatr in his praise verses for his client would surely have mentioned such important and prestigious events. It has sometimes been contended by skaldic scholars that Sigvatr's praise poem (or even those of Óttarr the Black) could well have originally contained additional non-extant verses which could have described these events, but this is just a guess trying to fill in the gaps.

Snorri Sturluson in his *Heimskringla* and the author of the *Legendary saga*, which are both late Icelandic works (whether or not they independently took information from the now lost slightly older *Oldest saga),* both report 'Olaf' as being at Rouen at (seemingly) roughly this time, but in my opinion this information most surely derived from William of Jumièges or the tradition he started. Similarly, the *Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr* (*Passio et Miracula beati Olavi*) possibly written in about 1150-1160 by Eysteinn Elendsson who became the archbishop of Nidaros in Norway from 1161 to 1188 says: 'Having learnt the purity of Gospel truth in England, he [Olaf] took faith wholly to heart and with devout zeal hastened to receive baptismal grace in the city of Rouen;'[2] but this too was clearly derived from William of Jumièges.[3]

Regarding Olaf's baptism there is a whole alternative tradition.[4] Adam of Bremen, writing well before any of these Icelandic and Norwegian writers, implies that Olaf was converted to

[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 133, n. 159, is referencing L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', p. 57. But Abrams (*ibid*, pp. 57-58) also shows how Olaf Haraldsson's sanctity soon left its mark in English records, for which see B. Dickins, 'The Cult of Saint Olave in the British Isles', *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 12 (1937-45), pp. 53-80. For a supposed baptismal cloak of Olaf recorded at Mont-Saint-Michel in the fourteenth century see as a way into the matter S. Coviaux, 'Norvège et Normandie au XIe siècle', *Annales de Normandie*, 55 (2005), pp. 195-212, at p. 198; L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', p. 57, n. 95.

[2] *A History of Norway and the Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*, ed. C. Phelpstead, trans. D. Kunin, p. 27.

[3] On the story's transmission see L. Jiroušková, *Der heilige Wikingerkönig Olav Haraldsson und sein hagiographisches Dossier. Text und Kontext der Passio Olavi (mit kritischer Edition)*, 2 vols (Leiden, 2014), vol. 1, pp. 4, 299-300, 320-21.

[4] S. Coviaux, 'Norvège et Normandie au XIe siècle', pp. 197-200, provides a good overview of the question of Olaf's baptism at Rouen.

Christianity in England.[1] Even Snorri Sturluson in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* in his *Heimskringla* says 'when King Óláfr Tryggvason came to Hringaríki to preach Christianity, then Sigurðr sýr and his wife Ásta and her son Óláfr had themselves baptised, and Óláfr Tryggvason acted as godfather to Óláfr Haraldsson. He was then three years old'.[2] Theodoric the Monk in his *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium*, 'The Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings', probably written in Norway in about 1177-1188, acknowledged that there were different traditions regarding Olaf Haraldsson's baptism. Theodoric says that some think that Olaf and his mother were baptised during Olaf Tryggvason's missionary campaign in Uppland (in Sweden) whereas others believe he was baptised in England. But he says that he had read in the 'History of the Normans', meaning William of Jumièges's *GND*, that Olaf was baptised in Rouen by Archbishop Robert.[3] Similarly, William of Jumièges's Olaf (together with his Lacman) had apparently responded, at least according to William, to Cnut's emissaries to help him in England after his father Swein Forkbeard's death in February 1014, if so, and remembering the important fact that Sigvatr was also later on Cnut's skald, why did he not mention this as well?

What has been the point of all this long detour? It is this: from nowhere in any skaldic verses, first probably orally composed in the tenth century but only written down, and with many

[1] For which see Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, book 2, lvii (55), pp. 94-95.
[2] *Heimskringla I*, p. 193.
[3] In English translation, concerning 'What some people say about the baptism of the blessed Óláfr', Theodoric writes: 'That he might the more easily make the whole country submit to Christ, King Óláfr therefore married his three sisters to men of high standing. He married one, whose name was Ástríðr, to Erlingr Skjálgsson; the second to Þorgeirr, a powerful man from the Vík who later burnt Guðrøðr Gunnhildarson to death in a house because he intended to seize control of the kingdom from Óláfr; the third to Hyrningr, the brother of Þorgeirr. And when he had made all of them accept baptism, he made his way inland, to Upplǫnd. There he came upon Óláfr, who was then a little boy of three, but who later became a faithful martyr of Christ. He was staying with his mother Ásta, for his father Haraldr was then already dead. (Haraldr was the son of Guðrøðr sýr, whose father was Bjǫrn, who was nicknamed 'the trader' and was the son of Haraldr Fair-hair.) That Óláfr was the future propitious hope and glory of the Norwegian people. According to some, the king had him and his mother baptised then and there; others maintain that he was baptised in England. But I, for my part, have read in the 'History of the Normans' that he was baptised in Normandy by Robert, archbishop of Rouen. For it is certain that Duke William of Normandy took him with him to help him in his fight against King Robert of France, whose by-name was Capet (he was the son of the most noble duke Hugh Capet), when together with the count of Flanders Robert was preparing to wage war against Duke William. In fact, he was trying to drive William out of Normandy, because his ancestors had wrested that province from the king of France by force. But whether Óláfr was baptised in Rouen or in England, it is clear that he was rather advanced in age when he was crowned with martyrdom, as those whom one should trust most in matters of this sort maintain …': *Theodoricus Monachus. Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium,* 'An Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings', trans. and ann. D. McDougall and I. McDougall, *Viking Society for Northern Research*, vol. 11 (London, 1998), pp. 16-17. There are some interesting issues here because Theodoric says that King Robert 'the Pious' (d. 1031), who was indeed the son of Hugh Capet, 'was preparing to wage war against Duke William', and that Robert 'was trying to drive William out of Normandy'. This is all deformed because after the death of William Longsword in 942 the next 'duke William' of Normandy was William the Bastard (or William the Conqueror). Of course, all of this history can be found in William of Jumièges's *GND*, which Theodoric had doubtless consulted when he was studying in Paris, but Theodoric seems to have conflated and garbled it.

changes along the way, very much later, and much less from later Icelandic/Norwegian histories and sagas, which all seem to get their information about Olaf on the Seine and his baptism from the Norman tradition starting with the *GND*, can we really concretely establish that a young Olaf Haraldsson ever came to Rouen and much less that he was baptised there.

If Clare Downham's query as to whether William of Jumièges's Olaf was really Olaf Haraldsson could in any way be correct then we would have to imagine a completely different and radical historical scenario. This would perhaps entail William of Jumièges's 'Olaf' being, like his associate Lacman/Lagmann, a product of the Irish Sea world, and there are certainly enough chieftains of this name, Olaf, in this milieu going back for at least a century and a half, and indeed going forward as well.

In summary so far, there are still many chronological and other points regarding William of Jumièges's stories about Olaf and Lacman which remain difficult to pin down; but more importantly for our examination of Aquitanian matters I still think there is room for a lingering suspicion that William of Jumièges's Olaf may not perhaps be identified with Olaf Haraldsson, the future Saint Olaf, and this idea is certainly worthy of more consideration than I have been able to give it here. My own view on this question has vacillated over the last few years and I remain something of an agnostic on the issue. However, if pushed, I must ultimately opt for the conservative and traditional scholarly view that William of Jumièges's Olaf was indeed Olaf Haraldsson. The main reason for this goes back to Ademar of Chabannes's story saying that it was Northmen from Denmark and the Irish Sea zone who tried to invade Aquitaine. As has been suggested the 'Denmark' part of this is most probably referring to some 'Danes' who had been part of Thorkell the Tall's combined and very heterogeneous 'Danish' army in England between 1009 and 1012 which quite likely also included a small flotilla commanded by a young Olaf Haraldsson who his skalds pushed into the foreground in their later praise of him. But 'Danes' and Northmen from the Irish Sea zone coming *together* to Aquitaine at this time (let us say in 1012-1013) and in this context would make no sense unless Olaf (and the other 'Danes' from England) had not at the same time joined with some Northmen come directly from the Irish Sea region, and here William of Jumièges's clearly Irish/Isles-connected Lacman (Lagmann) would appear to be a prime candidate. Was it in Aquitaine that Olaf had met Lacman/Lagmann? I think this is very possible and I shall discuss it more below, but we must admit that it can never be proved definitively.[1]

[1] C. Etchingham comments: 'The enduring problem here is the flimsiness of the basis for thinking that Lacman/Lagman was necessarily a Manx-Hebridean, rather than a Dubliner […]. On the other hand, since the Manx-Hebridean regime of Maccus and Gothbrith sons of Aralt (Haraldr) was definitely allied with 'Danes' in the

A final look at the abduction and captivity of Emma of Limoges

At the beginning of this chapter Ademar's story of the abduction and captivity of Emma of Limoges was mentioned and cited, as was Alfred Richard's influential, though not greatly founded, dating of this to about 1010. Now that we have looked at both the skaldic poetry evidence and at the stories told by William of Jumièges, a final deeper look may be fruitful.

Regardless of when we might place Emma's abduction, Ademar's words regarding her captivity and eventual release by the good offices of Richard II can give rise to at least two interpretations.

Ademar's statement is that after her capture Emma had been held for three years 'in exile overseas' (probably meaning England). Her husband Guy had then collected together a great ransom but although the Northmen had taken it, in bad faith, they had not returned Emma, and that it was only 'a long time after' that through the intervention of Richard II, again 'overseas', Emma was released and returned to her husband in Limoges.

Now this could mean that Emma was carted off 'overseas' for three years after her capture and that it was during this time that her husband Guy had collected together a large ransom for her. Then, somehow and somewhere (in England?),[1] this ransom was delivered to the Northmen responsible but Emma was still not released. Then that it was only a 'long time' after this that Emma was eventually released by the intervention of Richard II. If so then we may have to assume that Emma was held 'overseas' for longer than three years, although how much longer is difficult to say. Alternatively, and less naturally from the text if not really logistically, does it mean that Viscount Guy had collected the immense ransom rather quickly while the Northmen were still in Aquitaine and he delivered it to them there? But that they had perfidiously not released Emma but rather schlepped her off 'overseas' for three years and this is what Ademar means by a 'long time after'?

Whichever interpretation we may opt for it does make a big difference to the possible chronology of these events and who was likely responsible for her abduction.

If we might perhaps be allowed to tentatively conclude that the expedition to Aquitaine from England involving Olaf Haraldsson took place between 1012 and 1013, then what more might we say of the abduction and captivity of Emma of Limoges as told by Ademar? *A priori* from Ademar's *Chronicle* there is no compelling reason to place Emma's abduction at the monastery

980s, perhaps your "Olaf" was simply another "Danish" Viking opportunistic marauder.' Indeed, but does this mean that 'my' Olaf was 'another' Dane from the Irish Sea or the Manx-Hebridean zone? This would certainly dissociate the Olaf found in the *GND* from Olaf Haraldsson.

[1] How could this have been done?

of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm at precisely this time. This may have been the case but it may not have been. Ademar implicitly places this event *earlier* than William V's fight with Northmen somewhere on the coast of Lower Poitou. I do not think we will ever be able to recover the 'truth' here.

As has been mentioned already, Alfred Richard placed the capture of Emma in *c.*1010, but for no better reason than where Ademar places the story. The whole question hinges on where Emma had been held 'overseas', which I deem most likely to have been in England, coupled with to where and to whom Richard II of Normandy had sent his envoys, also 'overseas', to secure her release after (at least) three years of captivity. Here too there are at least two options.

First, if Emma had initially been captured in Lower Poitou by the force that had included a young Olaf Haraldsson, so perhaps between 1012 and 1013, then her release at least three years later must have happened at the earliest in 1015-1016. This is a time by when Olaf was back in Norway and after Swein Forkbeard was dead. On this chronology Richard II could not have intervened with Swein in England even though he might have made an alliance or treaty with Swein in 1013. But Swein's son Cnut 'the Great' was back in England in 1015. Thus, Richard II's intervention in England could either have been with Cnut in or after 1015, or even, although I think this less likely but not impossible, with King Æthelred who died on 10 April 1016. It is also not impossible that Richard had intervened with a chieftain in the Irish Sea zone, after all Lacman/Lagman had come to help him in 1013 after being in Poitou/Aquitaine. If, therefore, Emma had been abducted in either 1012 or 1013[1] it must have been by a part of the force which included Lacman/Lagmann. Even if Lacman/Lagmann was by now dead (which we do not know for sure) Richard would still have known some of the other Isles/Irish Sea zone Northmen involved.

Second, and contrarily, it may be that Emma was captured at an earlier period, perhaps during an earlier raid into Poitou? Such an earlier raid cannot be completely excluded. Swein Forkbeard by name disappears from the English historical realm from after 1005[2] until his reappearance in England in 1013. One historiographical idea is that he had been back in Denmark during *all* this interval.[3] But nothing could be less sure regarding the totality of this period.

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[1] I would prefer the year 1012 because this would have allowed Guy of Limoges enough time to gather the demanded ransom, as told of by Ademar of Chabannes, whilst the Northmen were still in the region.
[2] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* describes Swein's activities in England in 1003 and 1004 but it is clear that his fleet was still there in 1005. In addition, as was mentioned earlier, it is, in Ann Williams's opinion, quite possible he had arrived earlier than 1003, maybe even in 1000 or 1001.
[3] See for example S. Keynes, 'Vikings in England', p. 75.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle s.a.* 1005, in texts C, D and E (and even F), indicates that after leaving England in a year of great famine 'for Denmark' the (implicitly same) fleet returned again after a 'little time elapse' - actually in 1006:[1]

> Here in this year [1005] there was a great famine throughout the English race, such as that no-one ever remembered one so grim before; and this year the [enemy] fleet turned from this country to Denmark - and let little time elapse before it came back.[2]

Ian Howard says that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* suggests 'that it was Swein's fleet that "came back" in 1006'.[3] John of Worcester follows the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and says roughly the same thing, but he names Swein: 'This year [1005] England was visited with a severe and general famine, in consequence of which the Danish king Sweyn withdrew to Denmark - to return shortly afterwards'[4] Henry of Huntingdon also said that Swein led the (re)invasion in 1006:

> In the fifth year [1005], the Danes sailed for their own country; but meanwhile there was no lack of calamity to the English, for they were visited with a desolating famine, beyond any known in the memory of man.

And:

> In the sixth year [1006], the audacious Sweyn reappeared off Sandwich with a powerful fleet. He was accompanied by his three usual attendants, fire, slaughter, and pillage: and all England trembled before him, like the rustling of a bed of reeds shaken by the west wind.[5]

In his excellent and very insightful monograph *Swein Forkbeard's Invasions and the Danish Conquest of England, 991-1017*, Ian Howard casts doubt on this. Howard's opinion regarding Henry of Huntingdon's testimony is that: 'This account is probably inaccurate, however. Henry of Huntingdon seems to have presumed that if the army returned, as stated in the *ASC*, then its

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[1] See *ASC* MS C, *s.a.* 1005: 'Her on þissum geare wæs se micla hungor geond Angelcyn swylce nan man ær ne gemunde swa grimne. 7 se flota ðæs geares gewende of þissum gearde to Denemarce 7 lytelne fyrst let þæt he eft ne com.'; MS D: 'Her on þissum geare wæs se micla hunger geond Angelcynn, swylcne nan man ær ne gemunde swa grymme. 7 se flota þæs gearas gewende of þissum earde to Denmearke, 7 lytelne fyrst let þæt he æft ne com'; MS E: 'Her on þyssum geare wæs se mycla hungor geond Angelcynn swilce nan man ær ne gemunde swa grimne. 7 se flota þæs geares gewende of þissum earde to Dænemearcon. and litelne fyrst let. þet he eft ne com.'
[2] *ASC* MS E, ed. and trans. Swanton, p. 136.
[3] I. Howard, *Swein Forkbeard's Invasions*, p. 72.
[4] *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, II, eds. Darlington and McGurk, *s.a.* 1005.
[5] Henry of Huntingdon, *The chronicle of Henry of Huntingdon. Comprising the history of England, from the invasion of Julius Cæsar to the accession of Henry II*, trans. T. Forester (London, 1853), p. 186.

leader, Swein Forkbeard, would have returned with it, but there is no suggestion of this in the *ASC* and the evidence […] indicates that the Scandinavian army in 1006 and later was led by others.'[1]

In 1997 Simon Keynes's opinion was that: 'A "great fleet", possibly led by a certain Tostig, arrived at Sandwich in July 1006, causing disruption wherever it went and using the Isle of Wight as its base for its further operations in Wessex during the winter of 1006/7. The English sued for peace, and the handsome sum of 36,000 pounds was paid to the enemy in 1007; whereupon it seems to have returned whence it came.'[2] Keynes's 'whence it came' implies Scandinavia, but this is just a guess on his part. Peter Sawyer says: 'During 1006 Tostig arrived with 'a great fleet' that caused widespread disruption before withdrawing after being paid 36,000 pounds.'[3] Whether this is the case or not there is, truth be told, not really any evidence that there was an earlier Scandinavian chieftain called Tostig who came to England in 1006,[4] not even in the later chronicles of John of Worcester, Henry of Huntingdon or William of Malmesbury. Indeed by 2007 Simon Keynes seems to have dropped this whole idea of an earlier Tostig; see for example his article 'An abbot, an archbishop, and the viking raids of 1006-7 and 1009-12'.[5]

Whether or not it was Swein Forkbeard who came back to England in 1006 after leaving the year before, or it was some other unidentified Danes, possibly 'raised by Swein' and 'led by his trusted lieutenants' as suggested by Ian Howard,[6] and whether or not this army was led by an early Tostig or included a chieftain of this name, the activities of these Danes

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[1] I. Howard, *Swein Forkbeard's Invasions*, p. 72.

[2] S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England', p. 75. This is an opinion that has been copied or accepted by many subsequent historians; for which see just for instance P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 94; J. Müller and F. Reitemeier, *Von Æthelred zum Mann im Mond: Forschungsarbeiten aus der englischen Mediävistik* (Göttingen, 2010), p. 58; J. James, *An Onslaught of Spears: The Danish Conquest of England* (Stroud, 2013); but also by many others.

[3] Cf. P. H. Sawyer, *Die Wikinger*, Historisches Museum der Pfalz Speyer (Munich, 2008), available online as 'The Vikings in the British Isles' at https://www.academia.edu/12993349/The_Vikings_in_the_British_Isles. This whole idea of a *Toste* or Tostig being the leader of the Scandinavians who returned to England in 1006 (and not Swein Forkbeard himself) is also found in the earlier N. Lund, 'The Danish Perspective'; S. Keynes, 'The Historical Context of the Battle of Maldon', both in D. Scragg (ed.), *The Battle of Maldon AD 991*, respectively pp. 114-42, at pp 117-18; and pp. 81-113, at p. 109, n. 39. Lund highlights that 'A famous inscription in Uppland was carved in commemoration of Ulf of Borresta. He was a very active viking in his youth and shared in three gelds paid by the English: first Toste paid [him], then Thorketil paid, and then Cnut paid' (U 343-4). Lund identifies Thorketil ('Thorkell the Tall') and Cnut ('the Great'), but he says of *Tost*e that the context 'suggests that to contemporaries he was a chieftain of comparable importance', but is 'unknown in other sources'.

[4] Of course, it is not at all impossible that a (presumedly Danish) chieftain called Toste/Tostig was raiding in England in and after 1006, but this would not exclude that he came with Swein. After all the other two leaders Ulf came to England with were both powerful Danes: Thorkell and King Cnut.

[5] S. Keynes, 'An abbot, an archbishop, and the viking raids of 1006-7 and 1009-12', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 36 (2007), pp. 151-220, at pp. 155-56.

[6] See I. Howard, *Swein Forkbeard's Invasions*, p. 73.

in England are detailed in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* until 1007 when they were paid off with a large tribute.[1] What became of them after that is unknown. Where did they go? It is certainly not at all clear that the raiding-army 'returned whence it came', to Scandinavia according to Simon Keynes.[2]

At the end of the day there is really nothing in the historical record as we now have it that excludes the possibility that sometime during the period of say 1007, when the Northmen who had come to England in 1006 seem to have been paid off and, possibly or likely, left, to 1013 when Swein certainly returned to England, that Swein or some otherwise unidentified Danes who had come to England in 1006 had not made a raid into Aquitaine/Poitou, and he (or they) could there have captured Emma of Limoges. If this had been the case, and all this is rather speculative, then when Richard II of Normandy intervened 'overseas', in England in my opinion, to obtain Emma's release he might have done so with Swein Forkbeard.[3] Swein was certainly in back in England by July 1013 and indeed in Yorkshire later in this year. In addition, if the treaty made between Richard II and Swein was concluded in Rouen in 1013, and not in 1003, then it could have been at this time that Richard obtained Emma's release. If so, and continuing with such speculation, then this would push back Emma's capture to about 1010, precisely what Alfred Richard once conjectured. I leave open this possibility. But, of course, the main problem with it is that there is no evidence whatever that there was any, even fleeting, raid into Aquitaine at around this time, although it should be said too that neither is there any reliable dating evidence for most of the other the matters discussed in this chapter, which is of course precisely why it causes us so many problems of interpretation.

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[1] See *ASC s.a.* 1006-1007.

[2] S. Keynes, 'The Vikings in England', p. 75.

[3] Once again one has to accept that it is possible that Richard II had negotiated with one of the chieftains in the Irish Sea zone (even Lacman?), but I would just state that in my opinion this is less likely for reasons I have given earlier. Of course, what is being explored here is an imagined earlier date for Emma's abduction than 1012-1013 - say *c.*1010. It is possible to imagine that Lacman (or some of his Irish region compatriots) had around this time made a raid in Poitou and either remained around in Aquitaine for some years until he met up with the 'Danes' coming from England (with Olaf Haraldsson) in *c.*1012, or that after her abduction Emma had been schlepped off back to Ireland/the Isles (*trans mare*) for three or more years. Then in 1013 to early 1014 Richard had intervened to obtain her release from captivity in the Irish Sea zone, whether or not with any help from Lacman. But all this is mere wishful thinking, and as was mentioned above there is no evidence that Emma's captivity started earlier than 1012-1013 except for the placing of this event in Ademar's *Chronicle*.

A connection with Clontarf in Ireland?

Finally, let us examine a very interesting report of Ademar of Chabannes. After mentioning both the fight with William V of Aquitaine and the capture and plight of Emma of Limoges, Ademar seemingly tells us of the battle at Clontarf in Ireland in late April 1014:[1]

> At this time the aforesaid Normans [*Nortmanni supradicti*] [2] invaded the Hibernian island of Ireland with a large fleet, something their fathers had never dared to do, together with their wives and children and the Christian captives, whom they had made their slaves, with the intention that with the Irish wiped out, they themselves could inhabit this very prosperous country. This land comprised twelve states with many bishoprics, a single king and a native language, but they wrote in Latin. The Roman St Patrick had converted them to Christianity, and had become the first bishop there. The land was surrounded by the sea on all sides. During the winter solstice there are two hours of daylight and during the summer solstice the night is of equal brevity. And so battle was joined for three days without a break and not one of the Normans [= vikings][3] escaped with his life. Their wives threw themselves into the sea together with their children and drowned. Those who were captured alive were thrown to their death among wild beasts. The king let one of the captives live because he recognised that he was a Christian captive and he showered him with gifts.[4]

All historians as far as I can see identify Ademar's report of this fight in Ireland as a somewhat

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[1] There is now an enormous literature on this battle, for which see, as just a selection: S. Duffy, *Brian Boru and the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2014); *idem* (ed.), *Medieval Dublin XVI: proceedings of Clontarf 1014–2014: national conference marking the millennium of the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2017); H. B. Clarke and R. Johnson (eds), *The Vikings in Ireland and Beyond: Before and After the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2015); C. Etchingham, 'North Wales, Ireland and the Isles: the Insular Viking zone'; *idem*, 'Clontarf 1014: military significance, external dimension and outcome'; P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf'; *idem*, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin XVI* (2007), pp. 144-69; M. Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru: Ireland's Greatest King* (Stroud, 2007); C. Downham, 'The Battle of Clontarf in Irish History and Legend', *History Ireland*, 13. 5 (2005), pp. 19-23; A. Mac Shamhráin, 'Brian Bóruma, Armagh and the high-kingship', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 20. 2 (2005), pp. 1-21; J. Ryan, 'The Battle of Clontarf', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 7th series, 8.1 (1938), pp. 1-50; C. Lennon, 'The battle of Clontarf, 1014: a millennium of historical perspectives', *Dublin Historical Record*, 67. 2 (2014), pp. 26-38.

[2] My addition.

[3] Why E. van Houts has to add '= vikings' here is a mystery.

[4] E. van Houts, *The Normans in Europe*, pp. 214-15. Compare also the English translation of S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, pp. 226-27. For the Latin see *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Bourgain, book 3, chap. 55; *Adémar de Chabannes: Chronique*, ed. Chavanon, p. 177. For a French translation see *Adémar de Chabannes: Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, pp. 268-69.

inaccurate description of the Battle of Clontarf in 1014.[1] The most important point of this is that Ademar says that the Northmen involved were those which he had already spoken of before, *Nortmanni supradicti*, meaning with no doubt those who had previously invaded Aquitaine and fought with William V of Poitiers/Aquitaine.

Clare Downham's interpretation of all this is that: 'The contemporary chronicle of Ademar of Chabannes reports the presence of *Nortmanni supradicti* at Clontarf, but these were *Normannorum ex Danamarcha et Iresca regione*. Perhaps these records can provide a different perspective on events at Clontarf.'[2] Indeed they might. She adds that: 'This fleet had been active in Aquitaine before it travelled to Ireland', referencing of course Ademar's other stories.[3] Earlier she wrote: 'Lagmann was not the only viking from the Irish Sea zone whom Continental accounts identify as co-operating with Danes. The chronicler Ademar of Chabannes wrote that a joint fleet from Denmark and Ireland raided Aquitaine and then fought in Ireland, probably at the battle of Clontarf on Good Friday in 1014.'[4] Downham does not explore the possibility that the activities of Olaf and Lacman/Lagmann and the attack into Aquitaine may be related. For her Lacman/Lagmann, whom she variously describes as a 'king of Man' or a 'king of the Isles', had appeared 'on the scene as an opportunist seeking to reap political advantages from the upheavals wrought by Scandinavian fleets in English and Norman politics. In the early eleventh century the Hebrideans seem to have already developed a military reputation which made them desirable as allies or mercenaries to foreign rulers; a reputation that would continue for centuries',[5] although she does say that the fleet which had been active in Aquitaine then 'travelled to Ireland' (thus accepting the veracity of Ademar's report) she makes no attempt to identify it, its origin, or its leaders. Somewhat similarly but more recently Patrick Wadden also accepts the link between the attacks in Aquitaine and the Battle of Clontarf. He says:

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[1] See just for example: S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, pp. 225-28; E. van Houts, *The Normans in Europe*, p. 214, n. 73; Y. Chauvin and G. Pon, *Adémar de Chabannes: Chronique*, p. 269, n. 484; L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', p. 53; C. Downham, 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century', p. 61; *eadem*, *Viking Kings*, p. 134. The exception is C. Etchingham, who says (pers. comm.): 'Ademar's whole account has almost nothing to recommend it, in my opinion, as a reflex of the historical battle of Clontarf. Most fundamentally, Clontarf was not an invasion by outsiders, intent on conquest - which is merely a literary-legendary commonplace - but was determined by the interests of the indigenous Vikings of Ireland, who summoned others, notably the Orcadians, to their aid. While I have not studied it as such, the passages of Ademar that you highlight could perhaps, on the other hand, shed some light on the development of later traditions about Clontarf, especially in the broader Norse world.'

[2] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 134. This is indeed so, but regrettably Downham does not explore this point further.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 134, n. 169.

[4] C. Downham, 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century', p. 61.

[5] See C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 189-90, p. 192 fig. 14; *eadem*, 'England and the Irish Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century', pp. 59-61.

> Hiberno-Scandinavians from the Isles or elsewhere in the Irish Sea world also cooperated with Scandinavian forces in an attack on Aquitaine. The chronicler Adémar of Chabannes reported an attack on the port of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm[1] shortly before the battle of Clontarf by 'an infinite multitude of Northmen (*Normanni*) from Denmark and the Irish region with an immense fleet'. […] this report supports the belief that certain Hiberno-Scandinavians, especially perhaps the rulers of the Isles, were cooperating with those Scandinavian raiders who were active in England and elsewhere in the years before the battle of Clontarf. Adémar went on to report that this same group of Northmen invaded Ireland intent on conquest, but were defeated and slaughtered in a battle that is usually identified with Clontarf. Adémar's statement that there were forces from Scandinavia as well as Hiberno-Scandinavians from the Irish Sea world at the battle of Clontarf is supported by the evidence from the Irish annals.[2]

This is a most insightful and noteworthy observation in terms of that 'Hiberno-Scandinavians, especially perhaps the rulers of the Isles' were 'cooperating with those Scandinavian raiders who were active in England and elsewhere before the battle of Clontarf'. Yet Wadden does not really draw out the implications of his own statement. Who were the 'Hiberno-Scandinavians, especially perhaps the rulers of the Isles', who seem according to most scholars to have included Lagmann,[3] and who were the 'Scandinavian raiders who were active in England' if they were not some of the primarily 'Danish' Scandinavians who had dispersed from England in 1012, but who likely also included Olaf Haraldsson's no doubt small flotilla? Wadden's interpretation, although he does not really bring it out fully, does seem to point in the direction of my own interpretation here.

Another aspect of this whole complex dossier is that a number of historians have suggested that 'Normans' or 'Northmen from Normandy' were involved in the battle of

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[1] Of course, this is purely an assumption based on equating where Emma of Limoges was abducted with the 'Port-Aquitaine'.

[2] P. Wadden, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', p. 162. C. Etchingham's opinion (pers. comm.) is: 'The more or less reliable annals (*Annals of Ulster*, *Annals of Inisfallen*) for Clontarf - although even AU may be suspected of contamination by later "tradition" - in point of fact give no support to the notion of Scandinavian participation at Clontarf. This notion was cultivated by the medieval literary tradition (in Irish and Norse) of Clontarf as an epic struggle between the Christian Irish paragon Brian Bóraime and the forces of a pagan Viking world. Rationalising this to suppose "Danish" involvement against Brian has become fashionable in some scholarly circles, but there really is no evidence.'

[3] C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: 'I would say merely that formulations such as the views of "most scholars" to me smack of "group think", also expressed by "general scholarly consensus" […] I repeat that there is no evidence that Lagmann is to be identified as a member of the Manx-Hebridean dynasty, and the testimony of *Cogad* regarding Clontarf, for what it is worth, is that someone variously called Amlaíb Lagmuind or Amlaíb mac Lagmuind, a casualty at Clontarf, was a Dublin 'royal', not a Manx-Hebridean - for whose involvement at Clontarf, beside that of the Orcadians, there is not a shred of real evidence.'

Clontarf.[1] This idea could very well be, as Lesley Abrams says, 'extrapolated from a reference in Ademar of Chabannes's *Chronicon*, which described the participation of *Normanni* (at about the right date) in a three-day battle in Ireland at a place not named. These *Normanni*, however, are the *supradicti … ex Danamarcha et Iresca regione* who had invaded Aquitaine, not the *Normanni* governed by the count of Rouen, mentioned later in the chapter'.[2] But as has been mentioned earlier both the *Annals of Ulster* and the much later *Cogadh Gáedel re Gallaib* tell of an Amlaíb/Olaf son of Lagmann dying during the battle of Clontarf.[3] Following Lesley Abrams's lead,[4] in surveying the evidence Patrick Wadden acknowledges that: 'We are left […] with no clear evidence to support the claim that there were Normans at the Battle of Clontarf', and that, quoting Abrams yet again, 'unless better sources attest to their presence, Clontarf's Normans, fighting for their Scandinavian brethren may therefore be phantoms'.[5] Referring to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh's study of 'Brian Boru'[6] Wadden says that: 'The Irish material […] offers no clear evidence for the presence of Normans at Clontarf.'[7] That it would seem is that. That is that there were no 'Normans' from Normandy at Clontarf, although Wadden does finally add that 'neither is there any reason to rule out the possibility that they might have been there', adding: 'But Brian Bóruma and Richard II of Normandy had common friends in the form the rulers of the Isles

[1] See L. W. Breese, 'The persistence of Scandinavian connections in Normandy in the tenth and early eleventh centuries', *Viato*r, 8 (1977), pp. 47-61, at p. 60; D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066*, pp. 7, 36-37, who says (at p. 36): 'The last traces of large-scale communications [of the Normans] with the North are the well-attested visit of a Viking army to Northern France in 1013-14 [that is Olaf and Lacman's] and the presence of Normans in Ireland in 1014 at the battle of Clontarf.' Mentioned in this regard by Abrams, and following her by Downham and Wadden (see references below), is L. Musset, 'Les relations extérieures de la Normandie du IXme au XIme siècle, d'après quelques trouvailles monétaires récentes', *Annales de Normandie*, 4 (1954), pp. 31-38, where he says at p. 37: 'Normands de Normandie et Norvégiens d'Irlande semblent même s'être entr'aidés lors de la bataille de Clontarf en 1014', and, 'En 1014, des Normands se battaient sans doute encore pour la cause Scandinave à Clontarf, près de Dublin'. This is highly confusing I can see, but first it comes from Musset using the same word *Normands* for both Northmen in general and 'Normans' established in Normandy, at this time those of Richard II. But when one reads Musset's context closely (*ibid*., pp. 36-37) I think (but I may be quite wrong) what he is suggesting is in fact that his *Normands de Normandie* means not Northmen of Normandy (hence Normans) but rather Northmen from Normandy, and these he expressly places in a long line of 'Norvégiens, qui gagnaient nos côtes en contournant l'île britannique par le Nord et l'Ouest ; ils aboutissaient ainsi en Normandie occidentale, au Poitou, et même dans les pays musulmans d'Espagne et du Maghreb'. And it is: 'Sur cette route, vers l'an mil, les relations devaient être surtout pacifiques ; Normands de Normandie et Norvégiens d'Irlande semblent même s'être entr'aidés lors de la bataille de Clontarf en 1014.' Ultimately, I do not think Musset was really talking of Richard II's Normans being at Clontarf, but rather others, such as Lacman/Lagmann (?) who had followed this 'route' and ended up in Normandy, but I know the question of what Musset was really saying here is impossible to answer.

[2] L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', p. 53. C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 134, references this statement of Abrams which she says demonstrates the 'tenuous nature' of the assertion that there was 'a contingent from Normandy' that 'fought at Clontarf on the side of Sigtryggr of Dublin and Óláfr son of Lagmann'.

[3] See *AU* 1014.2; *Cogadh*, ed. and trans. Todd, p. 272.

[4] See L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', pp. 53-54.

[5] P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', p. 21.

[6] M. Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru: Ireland's Greatest King* (Stroud, 2007), p. 67.

[7] P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', p. 20.

descended from Haraldr of Limerick.[1] It is not impossible, therefore, that if there were Normans at Clontarf they fought on the side of Brian.'[2]

However, it is often believed that some, primarily Danish, Scandinavians had left England following Swein Forkbeard's death (on 3 February 1014) and Cnut's departure at some time in April 1014 and gone on to fight at Clontarf on 23 April. Sean Duffy says:

> At this point Brian [Boru] was on his march to Dublin, an advance that reached a climax in the great battle on Good Friday, 23 April. We do not know how quickly news passed back and forth across the Irish Sea at this period, but we can be pretty certain that those who gathered for the Battle of Clontarf knew of Sveinn's death ten weeks earlier, and they probably knew that Æðelræd had now been restored and that the attempt to have the young Knútr succeed him had failed (for now). In other words, in late April 1014 there were Danish chieftains and large numbers of Danish warriors who had seen their conquest of England slip away before their eyes. Surely some of them then enlisted with their old partner in crime Sigurðr of Orkney, whose new earldom, it has been credibly argued, was 'a creation of the Danish empire'[3] and who had a great scheme to put their suddenly underemployed conquering talents to good use. Together they would make up for lost English ground in what they were no doubt promised would be a walkover in Ireland.'[4]

Patrick Wadden is of the same opinion:

> It seems likely […] that the Irish records of the battle of Clontarf accurately reported the presence of troops from Scandinavia. The Scandinavians were more likely individuals originally come to participate in the Danish conquest of England but who were, after Sveinn's death and Knútr's departure, looking for alternative sources of revenue and adventure.[5]

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[1] This is a total assumption.

[2] P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', p. 33. Without wanting to get into this matter more here one might also wish to examine closer and more generally the 'evidence' of the presence of Northmen from 'France', or having a connection with France, at Clontarf, for which see in the first instance P. Wadden, 'The Normans in the Irish Sea world in the era of the Battle of Clontarf', pp. 19-20; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 301-3.

[3] S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, p. 245, n. 12, references here A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, pp. 300-308. 'Sigurðr of Orkney', or Sigurðr *digri*, who died at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, is also a very interesting person, particularly for French interests regarding his father who seems to have been called an early form of 'Louis', which as Woolf (*ibid*., p. 303) has proposed is very suggestive 'of a specific link between Sigurð's father and France'. It could be worthwhile to consider what this link may have been.

[4] S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, pp. 244-45.

[5] P. Wadden, 'Brian Bóraime, the Insular Viking world, and the battle of Clontarf', p. 163.

So is Clare Downham who says amongst other things that 'the presence of a Scandinavian contingent at the battle could be explained by the employment of mariners who had participated in the conquest of England',[1] and more generally: 'Sigtryggr of Dublin may have been able to recruit mercenaries to fight at Clontarf, as so many mercenary fleets were active around Britain at this time.'[2]

In response to the views of Duffy and Downham, Colmán Etchingham is very sceptical. He writes:

> Apart from the lack of positive evidence for Danish involvement at Clontarf - implied by 'surely' in two of these remarks[3] - it is counter-intuitive. The death of the Danish King Sweinn in February 1014 ended abruptly the sweeping triumph achieved in England between August and December 1013. When the English magnates recalled Æthelred from his exile in Normandy, Sweinn's son Knútr, although acclaimed successor by the Danish forces, withdrew from England. This meant Knútr was in no position to intervene in support of Sitriuc at Clontarf, if he were minded to, and the notion that his warriors did so independently after their morale-sapping setback in England, is unsubstantiated and unlikely.[4]

For Duffy, Downham, Wadden and Etchingham the attempted Danish 'conquest of England' is referring to that of Swein Forkbeard starting in August 1013. But it will be remembered that the more extensive Danish raiding in England (whether we want to call this an attempted conquest) happened over the period of 1009 to 1012. It was a very conglomerate force whose main leader was probably Thorkell the Tall, but it probably included a very young Olaf Haraldsson. But although Thorkell seems to have remained with 45 ships and taken service with King Æthelred the rest of the 'raiding-army dispersed as widely as it had gathered earlier' as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says. I have already argued that it was some of these dispersing 'Danes' from England (but including Olaf Haraldsson, whether one wants to call him a 'Norwegian' or not) who had then gone on to make raids in (probably) northern Brittany and then more extensively in Aquitaine (but probably not into Galicia) in the period 1012 to 1013, before some of them returned North making raids in Brittany before responding at some point to a request of Richard II of Normandy to assist him in his fight with Count Odo, which is

[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 59-60 and n. 244. Cf. also C. Downham, 'Clontarf in the Wider World', *History Ireland*, 22(2) (2014), pp. 22-29.
[2] *Ibid.*, *Viking Kings*, p. 134.
[3] The other 'surely' refers to S. Duffy, *Brian Boru*, p. 248.
[4] C. Etchingham, 'Clontarf 1014', p. 130. See also *idem*, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap. 12.4.

usually placed later in 1013. The two leaders who had come to assist Richard II were of course Olaf (Haraldsson) and Lacman/Lagmann. But they were not ultimately needed so Duke Richard paid them off with many gifts. In early 1014 Olaf (and maybe Lacman too) returned briefly to northern England either at the request of emissaries sent by Cnut before he made a swift retreat to Denmark at some point in April or, alternatively, Olaf helped King Æthelred return from his short exile.

We simply do not know if Lacman/Lagmann (a son of the king of the Isles Gofraid mac Arailt) had also been a part of the Scandinavians trying to conquer England before 1012, or if, alternatively, he had made his way to Aquitaine directly and separately, and perhaps there met the Danes from England (with the young Olaf Haraldsson in tow). This latter possibility would seem to make the most sense of Ademar of Chabannes's statement that the attempted invasion of Aquitaine had been undertaken by Northmen 'ex Danamarca/Danamarcha et Iresca regione'.

What might we tentatively conclude about the involvement of the Northmen from 'Denmark and the Irish region' who had seemingly made a major incursion into Aquitaine in, let us say, 1012 to 1013 at the battle of Clontarf in Ireland in 1014? Many historians have accepted this link and so ultimately do I.[1] But how had this actually played out on the ground and on the sea? All of this is very difficult to get a handle on. I think one reasonable scenario may run something like this: The very large and heterogenous army and fleet, perhaps under the overall leadership of Thorkell the Tall, had dispersed from England to many parts in 1012. One possibly very major part of this wide dispersal, which probably included a young Olaf Haraldsson with his own minor flotilla, had then gone on to make raids in northern Brittany and then moved on to coastal Aquitaine. After which leaving the Loire/Poitou region Olaf and the Islesman (or 'king of the Isles') Lacman/Lagmann had made raids on coastal Brittany and on Breton Dol probably in the summer of 1013 during which time they were contacted by envoys of Richard II duke of Normandy and induced or attracted to go to the Seine and Rouen. Their history there has already been discussed, as well as their apparent subsequent move to England in the spring of 1014 in one of two scenarios, and it is possible that Lacman/Lagmann died there in unknown circumstances. But if Lacman/Lagmann had come to Aquitaine directly from Ireland or the

[1] C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: 'The formula "many historians" is to me redolent of "group think". Whatever construction is to be put on Ademar of Chabannes, his account is highly fanciful and far removed from the recoverable facts about Clontarf. The one feature of either of his accounts that suggests an authentic, albeit very hazy, echo of "Norwegian Insular Viking zone" affairs, is the form *Iresca*, which looks like a derivation from Old Norse. Otherwise, to me, he tells us nothing useful about historical Clontarf - in the absence of reliable Irish evidence that there was any outside participation on Dublin's side at Clontarf, apart from that of the Orcadians. Ademar might shed some light on the development of later traditions about Clontarf.'

Isles, and not after any previous involvement in England, then his own 'Irish region' force could certainly have included other 'Irish region' Northmen as well, maybe even including his son Olaf.

One possible scenario is that these other 'Irish region' Northmen could have split from Lacman/Lagmann sometime after leaving Aquitaine and returned to Ireland where some of them fought at Clontarf. The alternative is that they had accompanied Lacman/Lagmann to Rouen but left there in early 1014 once they had been paid off by Richard II but then gone on to Ireland, whether or not with Lacman/Lagmann himself. In terms of the Northmen 'ex Danamarca/Danamarcha et Iresca regione' who Ademar also suggests fought at Clontarf after being in Aquitaine, these must have been those who had left England in 1012 and went on to Aquitaine but on heading back north they split from the young Olaf and decided to seek further fame and fortune in Ireland. This last speculation is really the only way to make sense of Ademar's story and it also avoids having to have 'Danes' leaving England immediately before the Battle of Clontarf which has been argued for by Downham, Wadden and Duffy but vehemently against by Etchingham.

A short summary of the Northmen's swansong in Aquitaine

By way of a summary, in regard to the last Scandinavian incursions into Aquitaine in the early eleventh century what might we be able to deduce from all the foregoing other than vague observations such as that these raids were part of 'la dernière vague des incursions scandinaves à la fin du Xe et au début du XIe siècle'?[1] Although there is much that still remains obscure and still needing interpretation, what we can without much doubt say is that these incursions like so many before them had very definite connections with elsewhere in western Europe, here with England, Denmark, Norway, Normandy and Ireland.

It would be redundant, and tiresome even, to repeat all the foregoing analysis and discussion. However, bringing all the evidence together what we can probably say is that these incursions or raids into Aquitaine - which most likely never reached Galicia in Spain - seem to have taken place in 1012 to 1013. They were conducted by a force of Danes from England, and a young Olaf Haraldsson with his own flotilla had likely tagged along. When they got to Aquitaine this fleet met up with some 'Irish region' Northmen, probably led by Lacman/Lagmann who was possibly a former 'king of the Isles' now engaged on a piratical/mercenary career but he could have been accompanied by other 'Irish region' chieftains as well. Having enjoyed and profited

[1] *Adémar de Chabannes. Chronique*, trans. Chauvin and Pon, p. 267, n. 473.

from their raiding in Aquitaine the two forces headed back north to coastal Brittany. Whilst there, and still making raids, they were contacted by Duke Richard II of Normandy to engage them as mercenaries in his fight with Odo of Blois-Chartres. They came to Rouen but soon found their services were no longer required so Richard paid them off with great gifts and Olaf went to England in one of two scenarios. Olaf engaged in a bit of fighting there before returning to Norway either in late 1014 or in 1015. Lacman/Lagmann disappears. It is not impossible that he too went England but given the chronology perhaps more reasonably he and his fleet went back to the Irish region where his son Olaf seems to have died at the Battle of Clontarf in April 1014. Whether Lacman/Lagmann died around this time or not is unknown. Finally, as just mentioned above, it is not at all impossible that the Danes Olaf had accompanied from England to Aquitaine in 1012-1013 had thereafter gone on to Ireland and that some of them had even fought at Clontarf which may fit in with the idea that some Danes did fight there and even that some Northmen come from France had too.

And that it seems is that. These raids in 1012 to 1013 seem to have been the swansong of the 'vikings' in Aquitaine.

Of course, later in the eleventh century and particularly in the twelfth century there were many groups of Scandinavians and 'Normans' as we might now call them who went to Iberia and onwards from there to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. Some of them probably did make landfalls from time to time in Aquitaine *en route*, but at least from the sources we have they did not engage in any hostile viking-type raids there. But that is a whole other story.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND THOUGHTS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The original objectives for this study were twofold. The first was to try to fill the yawning historiographical gaps in terms of our understanding of the activities of the various Scandinavian groups operating in Aquitaine, from the Loire valley southwards, over the course of two hundred years. The aim was not to just research and present some general summary but was rather to provide, to the extent possible, an in-depth assessment and interpretation of which chieftains were involved, what they did and precisely when, what relationship they had with each other and at various times with Frankish kings and magnates. Furthermore, another derivative objective was to see if there is any real evidence for a very long-lasting, almost permanent, settlement of Scandinavians in Aquitaine over nearly two centuries, as has sometimes been suggested. As has been seen the answer to this is probably an emphatic 'no'.

This has involved identifying, examining and interpreting literally hundreds of what we might call primary sources. These include, of course, all the available annals, chronicles and histories which touch on Aquitaine and more generally on France, but also many charters, letters, hagiographies and even numismatic evidence, as well as not a few later local texts and histories of differing degrees of reliability. With a few exceptions which are touched on below this objective has been achieved as I hope reading the preceding chapters will have shown. These chapters also include many section and chapter conclusions which it would be pointless to repeat here.

But the second objective of this study was to examine the various connections of the Scandinavians involved and place them in their wider European context. It should be apparent that, as elsewhere, the groups of Northmen with their fleets active in Aquitaine constantly moved around from place to place, not just in this specific region but between regions in present-day France and invariably overseas as well - to Britain, Ireland and the Irish Sea zone, Iberia and the Mediterranean, as well as to Frisia and Scandinavia itself. Whilst this is really a truism what scholarly work has been undertaken on the Northmen in Aquitaine has rarely brought out this point except in those few cases where such connections are very explicit in the sources. But in those cases where these connections are not so obvious a close analysis of all the primary data and the chronological and political context from France (including Brittany), the British Isles, Ireland, Iberia and the Low Countries clearly show that such pan-European connections existed in every case. This is what this thesis explores and demonstrates. Of course,

in some cases whilst it is clear that the Northmen under consideration came from somewhere into Aquitaine and left for somewhere afterwards (unless they were dead), there is often more than one possible scenario that one could propose. This study examines all these cases and possibilities, sometimes preferring one but at other times remaining equivocal. So too throughout the thesis, and although it is based very clearly on primary evidence the interpretations of earlier generations of historians are highlighted, explored and critiqued, sometimes going back centuries. Therefore, in some ways this thesis is additionally a historiographical study of vikings in Aquitaine, and partially even elsewhere in western Europe.

I do not in any way intend to repeat, rehash or even summarise all of the preceding several hundred pages of historical analysis and discussion. The oft-quoted recommendation that one should 'tell them what one will say, then tell them it, then tell them what has been said', whilst it may be good advice for a presentation or speech of a business manager or management consultant (both of which I was for several decades), is rather overrated. Nevertheless, although I am not generally a great enthusiast of historical 'phases' or 'stages' we can perhaps group some of the chapters into particular 'moments':

Chapter 2 looks at the earliest raids into France from 799 to the 830s. These were relatively minor raids and could sometimes have involved trade particularly perhaps in salt but maybe in slaves too. It is interesting that these raids took place on 'Aquitanian' islands and not further north. Some of these raiders certainly came from the North Sea and hence from Scandinavia and/or Frisia although some may have had an Irish origin.

Chapters 3 to 6 cover the period from 840/843 to about 865. This was the zenith of Scandinavian activities in Aquitaine and there were multiple connections with Scandinavia, Frisia, northern France, England and Brittany. In addition, these Northmen's activities extended twice during this time to Iberia and the Mediterranean.

Chapters 7 and 8 examine the period following 865 in Aquitaine south of the Loire and demonstrate the unlikelihood of any more permanent implantation or extensive activity thereafter.

Chapters 9 to 10 mostly concern the Loire and Brittany and the activities of certain chieftains there (such as Alsting/Hasting and Baret) from 864 to 892 and their prior and subsequent geographic connections. From the Loire valley there were also some incursions into Aquitaine proper - to Poitou and Berry for example.

Chapters 11 to 13 cover the period running from 896 to 939. During this period there were multiple connections between Aquitaine (including the Loire), northern France, Brittany,

Britain and Ireland: there was a constant coming and going between the British Isles and the Continent.

Chapters 14 to 16 examine the connections between Aquitaine and the wider world after 950. Incursions during this time were more sporadic and are often badly attested but some of them were undoubtedly real, such as an attack on Nantes in the late 950s and into more southerly Aquitaine in the early years of the second decade of the eleventh century. Both of these likely had connections with England, and in the second case with Ireland. Another incursion into Gascony in the second half of the tenth century is possible but cannot be proved; but if it happened it could be connected with the attested raids into northern Iberia between roughly 966 and 971/72.

Yet in spite of all the differences, in each and every case all these Northmen operating at different periods in Aquitaine had both a history and a future. They came from somewhere else and in general, unless they were completely annihilated, they eventually moved on elsewhere. As has been said before, references in the historiographical literature to such bodies as the 'Vikings on the Loire', the 'Vikings in Aquitaine', the 'Vikings of the Charente', or even the 'Vikings in Gascony' pretty much miss the rather obvious point that Scandinavian warbands and fleets continuously moved around and that their appearances and activities in Aquitaine and elsewhere were always and everywhere part of more extensive European itineraries and trajectories.

It is my sincere hope that the present thesis has demonstrated this in the case of Aquitaine, if perhaps only partially, although it is true that many difficult and tricky questions still remain to be resolved, if they ever can be. The 'Vikings in Aquitaine' were really no such thing, or at least they were not only this. This point is of course also true and to the same degree for everywhere else in western Europe during the 'Viking Age'.

At the end of the day the history of the vikings in Aquitaine is really no different to their history in the rest of western Europe. From the earliest days onwards their objective as far as we can see seems always to have been their own enrichment through raids and plundering. This enrichment could be obtained from stealing or grabbing wealth in the form of high-value goods such as salt (in the early and even perhaps later days in Aquitaine), church and monastic silver, gold and books, high-status captives (bishops and nobles) who could hopefully be subsequently ransomed, other unfortunate people who were destined to become their own slaves back home (wherever that was) or sex slaves (wives/concubines!), or to be on-sold in various slave markets in northern Europe, Ireland or Muslim Iberia, tributes from Frankish and other rulers, mercenary fees from helping Frankish kings or regional nobles in their internal struggles or against other

troublesome Northmen. This lucrative plunder was necessary for Scandinavian chieftains to reward their independent ship-owning followers, the independent *lið*, without whom they could have accomplished nothing. Sometimes, particularly in the first six or so decades of the ninth century, these often previously 'royal' chieftains wanted this wealth to build up their capability to return to Scandinavia to challenge for a regal position back home.[1] The history of these attempts is varied. But, later on, many of the raids in Aquitaine and elsewhere were conducted by chieftains commanding fleets already established outside Scandinavia itself - in France, in England or in Ireland. Certainly, it appears that at different times these Northmen around the coasts of western Europe must have received periodic reinforcements from their Scandinavian homeland - many young and 'noble' warriors lacking real prospects at home would have seen joining in the lucrative raids in western Europe as an attractive proposition - to gain wealth and perhaps return home in a better situation than when they had left.

At different times and in different places from the ninth century into the first half of the tenth century many Norse or Scandinavian chieftains and their men did try to attain some sort rulership over regions in the Low Countries, in 'France' and in the British Isles (including Ireland). Certain settlements were established. Ultimately most of these came to nothing. Some however did, particularly along the coasts of Ireland, in northern England (the later Danelaw), and, by sheer fluke or luck I would argue, in the future Normandy. Other potential Scandinavian 'colonies' in Frisia, in Brittany, on the Loire and maybe in Aquitaine eventually had no future; they died out although in certain places we can still find some remnants of their presence.

Overall, I would hope and suggest that this thesis adds much to our understanding of the Northmen in a large part of modern France, Aquitaine, as well as providing an example of and the evidence for their continual inter-connectedness across Europe throughout the 'Viking Age'. As with their compatriots elsewhere, the Northmen in Aquitaine were certainly 'connected vikings'. I also hope this study will be of interest and use for future historians interested in 'vikings', and perhaps it may provoke some debate on particular matters and concerning some of the interpretations I have offered. As Niels Lund once said: 'That sources on which so much depends are so open to interpretation and reinterpretation is what makes the study of the Viking period so fascinating.'[2]

In undertaking this work a huge amount of time and effort has been put into finding, understanding, evaluating, critiquing and interpreting far more relevant 'primary sources' than

[1] N. Lund, 'The Danish Empire', p. 156: 'Some of leaders of Viking expeditions were exiles, often members of royal families ousted from their homeland by more powerful rivals.'
[2] N. Lund, 'Allies of God or man?', p. 59.

one might imagine, not a few of them being very difficult to obtain and rarely if ever commented upon. My Latin skills did not help. I was typically told half a century ago in my English Grammar School that in Latin I could do better if I tried. My understanding of Latin has improved a lot since. But when it came to the abundant secondary literature on 'vikings' my understanding of Germanic languages, and even (though less so) Romance languages such as Spanish and Portuguese (not to forget French) has helped. Indeed, much of the most pertinent and insightful early literature on the Northmen in 'France' was written by German, Dutch and Scandinavian scholars. If one cannot read these languages then I think it would be quite hard to appreciate the full complexity and all the nuances of the subject.

Because this work is, as several times mentioned, a spatiotemporal one, there are many more thematic issues I have not explored. These thematic issues include such things as the reasons for the Scandinavian raids into western Europe; the intentions at settlement; the integration of the Northmen into the Frankish world; how the Northmen made 'peace' with the Franks; the nature of 'viking violence'; the Christianisation of the vikings of the diaspora, and so on. All these issues have been explored by many fine historians but never specifically in regard to Aquitaine.

Although almost all of the historical data in regard to Northmen operating in Aquitaine and their many connections is identified and discussed in this thesis there are a few issues that have been omitted or have only been looked at cursorily even though they concern Aquitaine. These omissions are solely due to the constraints of time and trying to keep an already long work in manageable bounds, and because this study does not in any way purport to be a history of the Northmen in France much less in all of western Europe. These omissions include in a very rough chronological order:

First, the earlier activities and whereabouts of Pippin II of Aquitaine in the late 840s and very early 850s until his capture in 852, and, slightly later, his possible involvement with Northmen before he joined with them to attack Poitiers in 857.[1] This is a huge subject but no historian has yet attempted either a biography of Pippin II or a detailed appraisal of the geopolitical situation in Aquitaine in these years, and Pippin's relationship with the Northmen would make a fine subject for future research. I have an essay on this subject in preparation which I had originally hoped to include in this thesis but which I eventually and reluctantly decided to leave out.

[1] Pippin II had escaped from captivity in 854.

Second, although the case of the mid-ninth-century bishop Actard of Nantes is touched on in Chapter 4 and elsewhere, the issue regarding his supposed capture by the Northmen and his exile overseas needs much more thought than it has hitherto been given, and this despite the excellent initial work on the subject of Pierre Bauduin.[1] This could perhaps fit into a study of how often high-value captives, such as bishops, were sometimes taken overseas before being ransomed.[2]

Third, the possible involvement of any of the Northmen involved on the Loire in 853, and most particularly the chieftain Sidroc, in the important fight in 854 for future control of 'Denmark' when many pirate chieftains operating elsewhere along the coasts of western Europe returned.[3] My own take on this matter will hopefully be published in a future article provisionally entitled '854 and all that: The fight for power in Denmark'.

Fourth, the future whereabouts and activities of the chieftain Sigfrid after he is last heard of in command of the Northmen on the Charente in 865.[4] Did he have any connection with the 'king' of the same name who was one of the leaders of the 'great army' in the north of France in the 880s? Or even with the joint king of Denmark in 873 called Sigfrid?[5]

Fifth, there is the issue of the 'Legend of Saint Léon', supposedly an evangelising bishop coming from Coutances in the Cotentin, and his purported martyrdom and decapitation at Bayonne in Gascony which is often but quite erroneously placed in *c*.890 even though we might highly doubt it ever happened at all.[6]

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[1] P. Bauduin, 'En marge des invasions vikings : Actard de Nantes et les translations d'évêques *propter infestationem paganorum*', *Le Moyen Âge*, 117 (2011), pp. 9-20.

[2] Jean-Louis Parmentier is presently undertaking a doctoral thesis about vikings and ransoms at the University of Caen Normandy under the direction of Alban Gautier: *Rançon et rachat des captifs dans l'Europe du nord (VIIe-XIIe siècles)*. See also J.-L. Parmentier, 'Les vikings et leurs captifs Britanniques : entre violences infligées et violences fantasmées', *Criminocorpus, Revue d'Histoire de la justice, des crimes et des peines, Châtiments symboliques et imaginés, Les moyens symboliques et imaginés du châtiment* (2020), pp. 1-11.

[3] This is discussed in a very preliminary manner in S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark', pp. 22-26, and see also C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap 7.4, including the comment: 'Sydroc/Sidric returned to the Seine in 855 or perhaps 856 - not I suspect from the Loire basin but from Denmark.' S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40, says: 'Sidroc disappeared for two years [from 853 to 855], perhaps going to Ireland, or possibly returning to Denmark, where internal dissension attracted many Vikings from abroad at this time.'

[4] For which see Chapter 9.

[5] Some very early thoughts on this are found in S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark'.

[6] There is an extensive (though generally old) literature on this subject, for which see to start with: V. Dubarat, *Le Missel de Bayonne de 1543* (Pau, 1901); J. de Jaurgain, *L'évêché de Bayonne et les légendes de saint Léon. Etude critique* (Saint-Jean-de-Luz, 1917); J. Menjoulet, *Histoire de Saint Leon apôtre de Bayonne* (Bayonne, 1876). More recently see R. Mussot-Goulard, 'Saint-Léon, Bayonne et la Gascogne à la fin du IXe siècle', in R. Mussot-Goulard and P. Hourmat (eds.), *Saint-Léon de Bayonne*, *Publication de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne* (Bayonne, 1994), pp. 34-35; F. Boutoulle, 'Bayonne au Moyen Âge. La croissance de la ville médiévale (VIe-milieu XIIIe siècle)'.

Sixth, the purported involvement of the founder of Normandy, Rollo, with the monastery of Saint-Benedict at Fleury on the Loire, as suggested in different ways by both Dudo of Saint-Quentin and Hugh of Fleury. I have an article in preparation on this issue which I hope to complete and publish in the not-too-distant future.

Seventh, and finally, there is the question of whether or not William Longsword and the Rouen Northmen had intervened in the suppression of the Breton revolt in the early 930s in concert with the Loire-based Northmen.[1]

With regard to archaeological matters, there is the question of the proposed viking base at Taillebourg on the Charente.[2] Although we know that Northmen were active on the Charente at different times and that some of the finds at Taillebourg indicate relations with, or influences from, the Anglo-Scandinavian world, I have not explored this question in detail in this thesis. Certainly, it would be worthwhile to build on the present work by examining afresh and in depth these archaeological data, particularly to try to determine whether the artefacts found do suggest a physical 'viking' presence on the Charente in the tenth century or are just evidence of trading and exchange relationships with the north of Europe similar to those carried on by more-northerly 'ports' such as Quentovic or Hamwic.

All this goes to show that the dossier of the Scandinavians who were active in Aquitaine still offers much more that can be explored in the future. I hope that I will be able to do some of this, but, hopefully and expectantly, other scholars may also wish to take up some or all of these issues.

Some intrepid scholars may also wish to compare the case of Aquitanian connections with the experience in other parts of Europe at different times. Colmán Etchingham has made a small start on this for Ireland, as too to some extent has Shane McLeod for England and Frisia. Christian Cooijmans's excellent recent thesis/book *Monarchs and Hydrarchs: The Conceptual Development of Viking Activity across the Frankish Realm (c. 750–940)* should also be mentioned in this regard. In terms of the mid-tenth century, I also think a more profound examination of the case of the misleadingly named 'Harald of Bayeux' than has yet been undertaken could be most instructive. Also, there is the case of Eiríkr of York often probably erroneously equated with the Norwegian Eric Bloodaxe. Did he ever really make raids in France and then Spain? Moving on in time, who was the Scandinavian chieftain 'Ulf the Galician' who was supposedly active in northern Spain in the first half of the eleventh century? Finally, there is the case of Frisia. As has earlier been mentioned there is a long and excellent historiography

[1] I touch on this in Chapter 13 where I doubt this involvement, although it certainly cannot be excluded.
[2] The references for this matter have been given earlier.

on the subject of the Frisian-based Danes but there are still many open issues. One which I find particularly intriguing is who was the Scandinavian who was leading the *Ostergau* Frisians in 873 when Rodulf was killed?

To conclude, although this thesis is very probably not the final word on the subject of the Scandinavians in Aquitaine and their wider European connections (and I certainly hope it is not) maybe it will inform discussion, debate and further research on the topic in the future. One lives in hope.

Appendix 1

ALTERNATIVE OPINIONS ON THE 850s

In Chapter 4 the activities of Northmen in France in the period 853 to 857/858 were examined and my own interpretations were put forward. There is, however, a rich historiography on this subject and several other 'takes' particularly regarding the Loire and Aquitaine, including who was involved in the siege of Betia. My approach in this thesis is always to explore alternative scenarios whether I agree with them or not. In this Appendix I will present and critique what some earlier historians have suggested on these matters.

Firstly, whilst there can be some debate about the nature of Godfrid's pay-off by Charles the Bald he had clearly left the Seine at the very start of 853 and, in all likelihood, he had gone back either to Frisia or possibly to Flanders - he was certainly back in Frisia by 855 at the latest. Furthermore, Godfrid most certainly could not have been the chieftain in Lower Poitou in late 852. The dating and other evidence clearly suggests that it was in fact Oskar's force which had fought at Brillac in November 852 and then, having attacked the monastery at Luçon in the following May, had made the short trip up the coast of Aquitanian Poitou to the Loire, where they burned both Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent in June. There is, therefore, no evidence at all which supports Aurélien de Courson's opinion that it was Godfrid who was established on *Betia* in 853 and that it was his fleet that was then besieged by Sidroc's newly-arrived fleet, a view followed almost word for word by Neil Price.[1]

In regard to the date of the naval siege of *Betia*, Arthur de La Borderie placed this in 853.[2] He states, without making any attempt at identification, that a fleet of Northmen entered the Loire in 'July' 853 and burned Nantes and the monastery at Mont-Glonne, before establishing a camp on the island of *Betia*, which, he says, they intended to use to block the entry to the river so as to reserve its exploitation for themselves.[3] This dating seems somewhat strange given that we know that Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent at Mont-Glonne were burned in June. Then 'a few months later', hence still in 853, a second fleet of Northmen led by 'Sidric' arrived

[1] *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, pp. xxxvii-xxxiii; N. S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany*, pp. 26/344-28/346. Price (*ibid.*) believes that Godfrid first came to the Loire and then Sidroc arrived, and in desperation Erispoë agreed an alliance with him. Then Sidroc betrayed Erispoë and his Bretons at *Betia* in 854. Godfrid then sailed up the Vilaine in revenge, while Sidroc returned to the Seine (it seems in 854!). Godfrid left the Loire in 855 to join his uncle Rorik in Dorestad. And then Sidroc's 'Loire Vikings' came back again in 855 to attack Bordeaux but 'were driven back to Nantes after an abortive attack on Poitiers'. I am not at all convinced.
[2] A de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, pp. 77-79.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

to 'share the monopoly'. He then recounts how Sidric (Sidroc) called for Erispoë's help and the subsequent siege of *Betia*, and then how the first group of Northmen moved on to Redon on the Vilaine. He then summarises the rest of the story as found in the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, even believing all the hagiographical elements. Then these Northmen, having not taken Redon, move on to devastate the *pays de Vannes* and take many prisoners for ransom. It is at this time (implicitly later in 853), that La Borderie says the bishop of Vannes, Courantgen, and Count Pascweten were captured, which is quite possible. There is nothing unreasonable in all this, but then La Borderie makes two speculations. First, after the naval siege of *Betia*, the besiegers, under Sidroc, are then able to move up the Loire and it is they who attack Tours. He assumes this free access to the Loire was part of the deal Sidroc had made with the besieged Northmen on *Betia*, who had themselves then sailed to the Vilaine (which they did). La Borderie then loses interest in Sidroc, who is never mentioned again, no doubt because La Borderie's sole concern was with Brittany. More worryingly is that after telling of the taking of prisoners for ransom in the Vannetais, which as mentioned earlier in the present work derives from the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*, he then has to resort to Le Baud's late fifteenth-century account. This he quotes at some length.[1] According to Le Baud, when the Northmen were spread out during their search for booty and captives Erispoë collected his army together, attacked the Northmen and killed a good part of them. The rest went back to their ships and left the region.[2] To this La Borderie adds that this must have been in 855,[3] and, as with Sidroc, he never mentions them again. The problem is that there is not the slightest shred of evidence that Erispoë's army ever defeated the Northmen as a result of which they left the region, it is just, I think, Le Baud's imaginative thinking.

René Merlet had a related but slightly different take. Rather than paraphrase his arguments I will quote them in full. Starting as we might expect from the *Chronicle of Nantes*, which he had reconstructed, he links this with the grant by Erispoë to Bishop Actard of half the *tonlieu* of Nantes, which he dates to 857, and to the letter of Charles the Bald to Pope Nicolas I in 867 which tells of Nantes being a 'desert' for ten years:[4] Merlet writes: 'Erispoé fait ici [in the grant to Actard of the *tonlieu* of Nantes] allusion à l'invasion de 853, au cours de laquelle les pirates danois pillèrent la ville de Nantes et s'établirent dans les îles de la Loire proches de la cité.' He then adds, 'Les Normands ne quittèrent plus l'embouchure du fleuve jusque vers le mois de

[1] A. de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 79.
[2] P. Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 115.
[3] A de La Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 79.
[4] R. Merlet, *La chronique de Nantes*, p. 46, n. 1.

juillet 856, et, pendant leur séjour en cette région, ils dévastèrent entièrement le diocèse d'Attard [*sic*]. Après qu'ils eurent été chassés de Bretagne par Erispoé en 857, la ville de Nantes, malgré les efforts d'Actard, ne peut se relever de ses ruines. Charles le Chauve, écrivant en 867 au pape Nicolas Ier, lui disait que depuis dix ans Nantes était presque changé en désert'.[1] René Merlet then sums up his view:

> En effet, les pirates danois, qui, en 853, s'étaient établis dans les îles de la Loire voisines de Nantes, n'abandonnèrent leurs stations que vers le mois de juillet 856, à la suite d'une attaque dirigée contre eux par Erispoé et Sidroc, chef d'une autre bande de Normands. Pour se venger du duc breton, les pirates pénétrèrent alors dans le cours de la Vilaine et allèrent piller le monastère de Redon, puis ils se dirigèrent vers la ville de Vannes, où, au mois de mars 857, Erispoé, accompagné des comtes Pascweten et Salomon, avait concentré ses forces. Pascweten et l'évêque de Vannes, Courantgen, furent faits prisonniers par les Danois ; mais Erispoé ne tarda pas à tirer vengeance de ses ennemis : il les attaqua en bataille rangée, les mit en déroute et les chassa de Nantes et des îles de la Loire.'[2]

It is difficult to decide where to start with a critique of Merlet's reconstruction. To start with the least important matter, Merlet places the grant by Erispoë to Actard of half the *tonlieu* of Nantes in 857, based partly on Charles the Bald's letter to Pope Nicolas in 867. But this is of little import. With regard to the Northmen involved, Merlet does not make any suggestions as to who they were. Those who first arrived at Nantes in 853 must, I have argued, have been Oskar's fleet, and they did stay in the 'region' until 857 as Merlet says. However, Sidroc only appears in Merlet's argument from some ill-defined place in 856, when he, in league with Erispoë, attacks the Northmen already established at *Betia*. Sidroc is just a 'chef d'une autre bande de Normands' and is never heard of again. The established Northmen on *Betia*, however, do seek revenge by going to the Vilaine in March 857 and pillaging the monastery of Redon. Although he does not say so, I think that Merlet's dating of the fight between Erispoë and Sidroc and the unidentified Northmen who had arrived on the Loire in 853 to July 856 might be connected to Prudentius's report of Northmen arriving on the Seine in August 856, who were likely Sidroc's, plus his placing too much reliance on the misplaced chapter 28 of the *Chronicle*

[1] *Ibid*.
[2] *Ibid*., pp. 47-48, n. 1.

of Nantes.[1] Next, and very importantly, we have Merlet's idea that when the Northmen who had been besieged by Sidroc and Erispoë had then gone to seek revenge on the Vilaine in March 857 they were met by a Breton army led by Erispoë, Pascweten and Salomon, who had concentrated their forces in the Vannetais and attacked the Northmen, although it rather unfortunately happened that Count Pascweten and Courantgen, the bishop of Vannes, were taken as prisoners. This dating of these events to March 857 is problematic. Certainly, in early July 857 Pascweten had recompensed the monks of Redon for the expense they had previously incurred to obtain his release from his captivity with the Northmen, but that this all happened extremely quickly in early 857 is doubtful. In addition, if the Redon charter regarding Courantgen still being a captive of the Northmen really dates from early 854, as is usually contended, then Merlet's chronology makes no sense at all. Lastly, it seems to me that Merlet's whole edifice and chronology is ultimately built around his final statement that in 857 after the attack up the Vilaine 'Erispoé ne tarda pas à tirer vengeance de ses ennemis: il les attaqua en bataille rangée, les mit en déroute et les chassa de Nantes et des îles de la Loire'. As mentioned earlier when discussing La Borderie, there is no evidence at all (even in the so-called *Chronicle of Nantes*) that Erispoë's Bretons had attacked the Northmen 'en bataille rangée', defeated them and chased them from the Loire in 857. Merlet just seems to have got this idea from Pierre Le Baud's late fifteenth-century *Histoire de Bretagne*.[2]

Walther Vogel dismissed both La Borderie's and Merlet's rather different reconstructions and dates. Both, he asserted, were completely false, 'vollkommen falsch'.[3] However, as we partially saw in Chapters 3 and 4, Vogel's own interpretation of the Scandinavians' activities on the Loire and in Aquitaine in the 840s and 850s was both garbled and often contradictory. Vogel accepted with confidence that Oskar's Northmen left the Seine in 852 and returned to Aquitaine: 'kehrte Oskar von der Seine nach der Gironde zurück',[4] and then after wintering in the area as fighting at Brillac, and the next year being responsible for the attacks on the monasteries of Luçon and Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm.[5] But then Oskar's fleet seems to just

[1] F. Lot, 'Mélanges d'histoire bretonne', *Annales de Bretagne*, 22.3, p. 424, n. 1, suggested, quite rightly in my opinion, that Merlet's dating of the siege of *Betia* to 856 seems to rely on Merlet placing undue faith in chapter 28 of the *Chronicle of Nantes* (cf. *La chronique de Nantes*, ed. Merlet, p. 41, n. 1; p. 84, n.1, and pp. 421-24), which itself places the siege after both Orléans and Angers had been attacked (both in 854), which reports are themselves borrowed from Adrevald of Fleury. Hence the siege of *Betia* must have been posterior to this - either in 855 or 856. René Merlet plumped for 856. 855 is preferred by E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfrankischen Reiches*, vol. 1, p. 423, and in a very strange reconstruction by J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 2, p. 251.
[2] P. Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne*, p. 115. The same passage is also quoted in La Borderie's *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 2, p. 79; although La Borderie would date the departure of the Northmen to 855.
[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 149, n. 2.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 143.
[5] *Ibid*.

disappear. Vogel wrote: 'Seitdem aber hören wir nichts mehr von Normannen in dieser Gegend.'[1] A few pages later, however, Vogel then contradicts himself. He again mentions that southern Aquitaine had been spared attacks of the *Normannen* for some years (in fact from 849), but then 'Oskar kehrte 852 von der Seine dorthin zurück, aber seitdem verschwindet sein Name aus der Geschichte'.[2] This is certainly true, but then Vogel immediately adds that in '852-53 finden wir ferner normannische Scharen in der südlichen Vendée', i.e. that it was some 'further/additional bands of Northmen' were responsible,[3] although from where these supposed new arrivals had come is not explored. This contradicts what he had said only a few pages before: that these attacks in southern Vendée were undertaken by 'a detachment' ('eine Abteilung') of Oskar's fleet.[4] With Oskar now conveniently consigned to 'history', Vogel implies that these new and completely unidentified bands of 'Northmen in Aquitaine' were building up their strength. According to Vogel they seem to have made *no raids* in Aquitaine after May 853 until 855, when the Northmen finally feel strong enough to 'conquer' (*eroberten*) Bordeaux for a second time. From Bordeaux they then go on to make unhindered raids deep into the interior,[5] but although as Vogel rightly says we know nothing about these he conjectures 'there could be no question of resistance because the nobility of this unlucky land [Aquitaine] were more concerned with their own affairs, such as making and replacing new leaders'.[6] Vogel can thus return to the Loire at Nantes. He has the Northmen who were already on the Loire when Sidroc arrived coming from the Seine, either in July or June 853, depending, according to him, on the testimony of Prudentius or the *Annals of Angoulême* respectively.[7] They then burned Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent.[8]

Here Vogel's presentation gets more confused and confusing. The Northmen who left the Seine in either June or July 853 were most probably Sidroc's, and as mentioned earlier if they had left in June then they would have been very hard pushed to also attack both Nantes and the monastery of Saint-Florent in the same month, and in the case of a July departure date this would have been completely impossible. Of course, they could have been Godfrid Haraldsson's fleet as suggested by de Courson and Price, but Vogel has already excluded this possibility.[9]

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 151.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 143.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 151.
[6] *Ibid.* My translation. See also *AB* 855.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 137 and n. 4.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 137-39.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

According to Vogel the fleet that left the Seine in June or July 853 was in fact not Sidroc's because he says that Sidroc 'scheint vielmehr mit seinem Bruder Ivar nach Irland gewandt zu haben', 'seems on the contrary to have turned to his brother Ivar in Ireland'![1] As will be shown below this is pure fantasy on Vogel's part. But the consequence is that suddenly we have yet another unidentified fleet and leader leaving the Seine for the Loire in 853 - whose we are not told. It was this completely imaginary fleet that not only supposedly burned Nantes and Saint-Florent but was also responsible for the attack on Tours in November 853 as well as the further attacks along the Loire in 854.[2] Then, rather miraculously, according to Vogel Sidroc seems to have stopped helping 'his brother Ivar' in Ireland and come to the Loire in the summer of 855: 'Da erschien plötzlich im Sommer 855 eine neue normannische Flotte von 105 Schiffen unter Sidroc an der Loiremündung', 'Then suddenly a new fleet of Northmen appeared at the mouth of the Loire in the summer of 855 under Sidroc'.[3] Vogel then speculates in a typically complex German sentence: 'Mochte Sidroc nun den hier lagernden Piraten [who are not identified] den Besitz ihrer fetten "Weidegründe" nicht gönnen oder ihre reiche Beute sich mühelos aneignen wollen', 'Did Sidroc not indeed want to grab the rich/fat "raiding/grazing grounds" of the pirates established here [on the Loire] or want to take possession for himself of their rich booty without any effort'.[4] He then tells the story of the siege of the island of *Betia* as reported in the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium*,[5] dating this to 855, after which he has Sidroc finally returning to the Seine,[6] where he arrives on 18 July 855[7]. Here he is explicitly accepting the dating of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* rather than Prudentius of Troyes for his arrival. It was these unidentified 'Northmen of the Loire' whom Sidroc had besieged at *Betia* and who had bought him off. Overall, and as with the previous decade, we must reject most of Vogel's reconstruction and datings; they are not only contradictory, confused and confusing, but also simply wrong. In order to (rather badly) sustain his opinion, Vogel first has to conjure up the many legendary 'sons of Lothbrok', including Sidroc, whom he identifies as a brother of Ivar in Ireland, who according to him was a son of the legendary Ragnar Lothbrok,[8] and his non-existent trip to

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 136, my translation. Vogel, *ibid*., pp. 126, 147, explicitly identifies Ivar as one of the sons of (Ragnar) Lothbrok.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 144.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 148, my translation.
[4] *Ibid*., my translation.
[5] *Ibid*., pp. 148-49.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 148.
[7] *Ibid*., p. 150.
[8] *Ibid*., pp. 126, 147, 410. W. Vogel, *ibid*., pp. 410-11, then confuses the issue even more by saying: 'Ein andere Ragnarsohn [besides Berno/Bjørn] ist in Frankenreich kaum nachweisbar, dagegen treten die Brüder Halfdan, Ubbe und Ivar - zwiefellos die Ragnarsöhne - seit 855 in England auf [...]. Was Sigurd Schlangenauge [the legendary Sigurd "Snake-in-the-Eye"] betrifft, so gab es in Frankenreich und auf den britischen Inseln so viele

Ireland (see below). He also needs to create out of thin air many new unidentified Scandinavian fleets, such as that which he has replace Oskar's in Aquitaine and another fleet that came from the Seine to the Loire in 853 and which was responsible for the subsequent attacks along the Loire. I would like to suggest that it was Vogel's rather credulous belief in the many late legends of the sons of Ragnar Lothbrok, coupled with his completely unfounded distinction between, and strict separation of, Scandinavian fleets operating along the Loire and in more southerly Aquitaine that led him into these errors.

We know that Sidroc was operating on the Seine in 852-53 and that he returned there in 856, or 855 if we prefer the statement of the monk of Fontenelle. If the 'siege' of the island of *Betia* happened in the autumn of 853, as has here been suggested it did, and Sidroc left the area immediately thereafter, the question arises as to where he had been in the intervening years? Simon Coupland accepts that Sidroc left the Loire in late 853 and suggests that he could well have been one of the many Danish pirates who had opportunistically rushed back to Denmark in 854 to try to grab power and influence back home during the 'civil war' there, during which Horik I was deposed and killed.[1] Simon Coupland says: 'Sidroc disappeared for two years [from

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Wikingerführer ähnlichen Namens, daß es schwierig ist, den richtigen herauszufinden. Daß der Sidroc, der in Verein mit Gottfried 852 und mit Berno 855 in der Seine auftritt, als der Ragnarsohn zu betrachten ist, ist schon seines Namens wegen unwahrscheinlich, der vielmehr einem nordlichen Sigtryggr als einem Sigurdr oder Sigfrødr entspicht', 'Another son of Ragnar is hardly provable in France, on the other hand the brothers Halfdan, Ubbe and Ivar - doubtless sons of Ragnar - appear in England from 855 [...]. Regarding Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye there were so many Viking leaders having a similar name in France and in the British Isles that it is difficult to establish/find the correct one. Whether the Sidroc who appears in league with Gottfried in 852 and with Berno in 855 on the Seine is to be regarded as a son of Ragnar is in fact, because of his name, improbable, and is much more likely to correspond with a northern Sigtryggr than with a Sigurdr or Sigfrødr'. So Sidroc seems not to be a son of Ragnar Lothrok, although Vogel had earlier said on several occasions he was. Vogel continues: 'Mehr hat die Annahme für sich, daß wir in dem schon erwähnten Brüderpaar Siegfried und Halfdan, welche 873 als Könige über Dänemark herrschten, Ragnarsöhne zu sehen haben, zumal auch die Sage [...] den Sigurd Schlangenauge zum herrscher von Dänemark macht. Dann wäre sein Bruder Halfdan (Ann. Fuld. 873) derselbe, der in England wirkte und von 875 bis ca. 877/80 König von Northumberland war. Siegfried wieder kann mit eine der später in Frankreich auftretenden Normannenkönige identifiziert werden, entweder mit dem Führer des "großen herres", der 887 in Friesland starb, oder dem Siegfried, der 891 bei Löwen fiel [...]', 'The assumption that in the already mentioned brothers Siegfried and Halfdan who in 873 ruled as kings over Denmark were sons of Ragnar has more going for it, and in addition because the sagas [...] make the Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye into the ruler of Denmark. Then his brother Halfdan would have been (Ann. Fuld. 873) the same person who operated in England from 875 to *c*.877/80 and was King of Northumbria. Siegfried can furthermore be identified with a later appearing Scandinavian king, either with the leader of the "great army" who died in Frisia in 887 or the Siegfried who fell at Louvain in 891 [...]'. But Vogel then rightly adds that 'diese Vermutungen sind jedoch sehr unsicher', 'these conjectures are however unsure'. Certainly, I would agree with Vogel that the name Sidroc is equivalent to the Old Norse name Sigtryggr, but is Vogel saying he was a son of Ragnar Lothbrok or not? In regard to 'Sigfrid' who was the/a joint king of Denmark in 873, I have argued elsewhere that Sigfrid's brother Halfdan was active in England in the 870s (cf. S. M. Lewis, 'Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark'). In fact, the chieftain Sidroc active in France in the 850s could well have been one of the jarls called Sidroc who died in England fighting the English at the very end of 870 and in 871, maybe even, as F. Lot, 'La grande invasion', p. 726, n. 1, thought, the 'Jarl Sidroc the Old' who died at the battle of Ashdown; a view shared by S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40, n. 83.

[1] For the events in Denmark in 854 see in the first instance: *AB* 854: ed. Grat, p. 70; trans. Nelson, p. 80; *AF* 854: ed. Kurze, pp. 44-45; trans. Reuter, p. 36; *AX* 855: ed. von Simson, p. 18; *Vita Anskarii auctore Rimberto*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH*, *SRG*, 55 (Hanover 1884), p. 63; *Anskar, the apostle of the North. 801-865: translated from the Vita*

853 to 855], perhaps going to Ireland, or possibly returning to Denmark, where internal dissension attracted many Vikings from abroad at this time.'[1] That Sidroc went back to Denmark in 854 is quite possible, and I will discuss this important year extensively in a future article.[2] It is a view shared by several other historians. However, the possibility that Sidroc went to Ireland can be ruled out. Coupland took his Irish option from Walther Vogel. As mentioned earlier, Vogel wrote that Sidroc did not go to the Loire immediately after leaving the Seine in 853 but 'scheint vielmehr mit seinem Brüder Ivar nach Irland gewandt zu haben'![3] This is one of Vogel's more fantastic ideas. He got the thought from Johannes Steenstrup, although Steenstrup himself never suggested Sidroc went to Ireland. Vogel references Steenstrup's own reference to what they both called the 'Annals of Inisfallen';[4] but this really means what are nowadays called the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen*, which are a mid-eighteenth-century (*c.*1765) compilation of medieval Irish annals reworked and augmented with material from later traditions in the form of interpolations made by John O'Brien, bishop of Cloyne, and the Reverend John Conry.[5] They are, at least here, of little independent historical worth. In this late compilation we find it written:

> DCCCLIII. Kl. Amlaibh mac Righ Fionnlochlan. Do thigheacht an Eirinn, gur ghiallsat Lochlannaicch Eirionndo, 7 cios a Ghaedhalaibh do. Sitrioc, 7 Jobar a dis dearbhrathair do thighheacht maille ris don turas soin. Gialla na n Deise Mumhan do thabhairt do Mhaolseachloinn.[6]

> 853 Kl. Amlaíbh son of the king of *Fionnlochlan* came to Ireland, and the *Lochlannaigh* of Ireland submitted to him, and tribute (paid to him) by the Irish. Sitrioc and Íobar[7] his two brothers came along with him on that expedition/occasion.[8] The hostages of the Déisi of Munster were given to Maol Seachlainn.[9]

Anskarii by Bishop Rimbert, his fellow missionary and successor, trans. C. H. Robinson (London 1921), pp. 100-1. Adam of Bremen used the *Vita Anskarii* in his telling of the events (see *History of the Archbishops* book. 1, xxviii (30), 32).

[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40.

[2] S. M. Lewis, '854 and all that', forthcoming.

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 136

[4] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p 136, n. 3; J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, vol. 1, p. 113.

[5] See M. Ní Úrdail, 'Some observations on the "Dublin Annals of Innisfallen'", *Ériu*, 57 (2007), pp. 133-53.

[6] C. O'Conor, 'Annales Inisfalenses, ex duobus codicibus, Dubliniense et Bodleiano', *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores*, 2 (1825), p. 34.

[7] C. Etchingham (pers. comm.) says: "'J'' is presumably for 'I' as it often is in the work of Anglo-Norman scribes.'

[8] *Turus* can mean either expedition or occasion. I thank Etchingham for this point.

[9] I thank C. Etchingham for this translation.

The actual *Annals of Inisfallen* are the earliest but not the fullest surviving redaction of the original 'Chronicle of Ireland',[1] and they say nothing about a Sitrioc/Sidroc in Ireland in the mid-ninth century, nor do any other Irish annals. The earliest mention of what appears to be this Sitrioc that I am aware of is in Giraldus Cambrensis's (Gerald of Wales's) late twelfth-century *Topographia Hiberniae* (*Topography of Ireland*), and there can be little doubt that it was from this source that the compiler of the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen* partly took (and changed) his information. The *Topography of Ireland* was written in about 1188 shortly after Giraldus's two visits to Ireland in 1183 and 1185/6. Giraldus wrote:

> Some adventurers arrived again in the island from Norway and the Northern isles […] These foreigners had for leaders three brothers, whose names were Amelaus (*Amelavus/Amelaus*), Sytaracus (*Sitaracus*), and Yvorus (*Yvorus*). They built first the three cities of Dublin, Waterford and Limerick, of which Dublin fell to the share and was under the control of Amelaus, Waterford of Sytaracus, and Limerick of Yvorus; and from them colonies were sent in process of time to found other cities in Ireland […].[2]

It was either during his two tours of Ireland, or perhaps more likely from an earlier written source, that Gerald must have either heard of or read stories about Amlaíb (ON Áleifr or Óláfr), Ímar (ON Ívarr) and Sitrioc/Sidroc (ON Sigtryggr) and Latinised their names to Amelavus/Amelaus, Yvorus and Sitaracus. Giraldus gives no date for the arrival and activities of these three chieftains, but he does seem to place their arrival in Ireland 'not long after' the historically attested activities and death, in 845, of Turgés, the probable chieftain of the Scandinavians on the River Shannon.[3] In regard to Giraldus's 'foundation' of the towns of Dublin, Waterford and Limerick by these three chieftains, what it seems Gerald has done is take stories he had read or heard about *later* chieftains with these names who perhaps had had connections with these towns,[4] and woven his tale from them. In any case as Downham says

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[1] T. M. Charles-Edwards (ed. and trans), *The Chronicle of Ireland* (Liverpool, 2006), p. 7. For an introduction to the *Annals of Inisfallen* see *The Annals of Inisfallen (MS. Rawlinson B. 503)*, ed. S. Mac Airt (Dublin, 1951), pp. vii-lii.

[2] *Giraldus Cambrensis. The Topograpghy of Ireland*, trans. T. Forester (Cambridge, Ontario, 2000), p. 85. For the original Latin text, see 'Giraldus Cambrensis in *Topographia Hibernie*: Text of the First Recension', ed. J. J. O'Meara, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* 52C (1948-50), pp. 113-78, at p. 175.

[3] See *AU* 845.3 and *AU* 845.5. For a thorough discussion of Turgés and his 'legend' in the *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib* see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 6.

[4] See, for instance, C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, pp. 238-45 for Amlaíbs; pp. 257-61 for Ímars; pp. 270-74 for Sitriucs. I will not to hazard a guess as to which of these Gerald of Wales might have implicitly been referring to; but besides the Amlaíb who arrived in 853 and Amlaíb Sigtryggsson (Cuarán), both of whom ruled at Dublin, there was also an Ímar 'Lord of the foreigners of Limerick' in the late tenth century. It is difficult to find a *Sitriuc* who might have inspired Gerald's story of the foundation of Waterford. There was of course Sitriuc 'Silkenbeard', the son of Amlaíb Cuarán, but he did not have much connection with Waterford except for killing the Scandinavian

this story is an example of how 'some late sources show inhabitants of Ireland's viking towns' looking back 'to Ívarr as a founding figure'.[1]

Most probably taking his initial lead from Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales), the compiler of the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen* then places the arrival of Amelavus/Amelaus, Yvorus and Sitaracus very precisely in the year 853. This is doubtless because this is the date given by the *Annals of Ulster* and other Irish annals for the arrival in Ireland of a chieftain called Amlaíb: 'Amlaíb mac rígh Laithlinde do thuidhecht a nÉrinn coro gíallsat Gaill Érenn dó 7 cís ó Goídhelaib', 'Áleifr, son of the king of *Laithlinn*, came to Ireland, and the Foreigners of Ireland submitted to him, and (he took) tribute from the Irish.'[2] Colmán Etchingham says:

> The first part of the passage in the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen* is of course in essence a rewording in Modern Irish of AU's record for 853 of the arrival of Amlaíb *mac ríg Laithlinne* 'son of the king of *Laithlinn*' and his subjugation of Vikings and Irish alike - but with fanciful expansion of *Laithlinn* (the significance of which was already forgotten by the eleventh century) with a literary flourish to *Fionnlochlann* (which, if it meant anything at all), should in the later Middle Ages mean something like 'Fair Norway'.[3]

Furthermore, the linking of Amlaíb and Ímar was perhaps derived from the fact that a chieftain called Ímar was for a time associated with Amlaíb in the late 850s - starting in 857 when the *Annals of Ulster* say: 'Roiniudh re n-Imar & re n-Amlaiph for Caittil Find cona Gall-Gaedelaibh h-i tiribh Muman', 'Ímar and Amlaíb inflicted a rout on Caitil the Fair and his Norse-Irish in the lands of Munster.'[4] But the compiler of the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen* also added that the three chieftains were brothers, which Giraldus did not say. He probably took this fraternal relationship from the late *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*,[5] which are the only Irish source to state that the Dublin-based chieftains Ímar and Amlaíb, along with another mysterious chieftain called Auisle, were brothers.[6] The fraternal relationship of this triumvirate of Amlaíb, Ímar and Auisle in mid-ninth-century Ireland is very unlikely to be true if Ímar in Ireland is to be equated

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'king' of Waterford, Ragnall, at Dublin in 1055. Sitriuc ua Ímair was operating in 917 with his brother or cousin Ragnall who had recently arrived at Waterford. And, of course, there was the Sihtric/Sidroc who was briefly a king at York in about 942 before being killed on the Seine the the next year (he had originally come from Ireland too). But none of these Sitriucs could remotely be associated with 'founding' the town of Waterford.

[1] C. Downham, *Viking Kings*, p. 6.

[2] *AU* 853.2; trans. Etchingham.

[3] Personal communication.

[4] *AU* 857.1.

[5] The compilation of which is usually dated to the mid-eleventh century but it certainly includes earlier annalistic material.

[6] *FAI* §347, p. 127.

with the Inguar of the early so-called 'great army' in England in the 860s, as is very commonly contended.[1] On the other hand, if Ímar and Inguar were separate chieftains, an old view that is perhaps slowly coming back into vogue,[2] then a brotherly or at least kin relationship between two or three of them is quite possible. Regrettably a full discussion of this issue is outside the scope of this study. In summary, regarding the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen* as referenced indirectly by Vogel, Etchingham says:

> For what it is worth, the passage [in the *Dublin Annals of Inisfallen*] clearly represents *Sitrioc* and *Íobar* (a very late form of *Ímar,* the normal Middle Irish reflex of Norse Ívarr) as brothers not only of each other but also of *Amlaíbh*. It is all obviously very late and spurious and must [...] go back to something like the 'tradition' reflected in Giraldus. That 'tradition' is as likely to have been derived by Giraldus from a written source as from an oral informant - much of Giraldus does seem to come from written sources. In this case it is but one example of how grotesque distortions of chronology and other aspects of the Viking Age had become a veritable literary genre in Ireland by the twelfth century.[3]

The conclusion then must be that there is no real evidence for any chieftain called Sitrioc/Sidroc/Sigtryggr operating in Ireland in the 850s, and certainly not the slightest hint or support for Vogel's contention (or Coupland's slightly different 'possibility') that the chieftain Sidroc who left the Seine in 853 was a brother of Ímar in Ireland, or indeed ever went there.

Moving on, if Sidroc really did leave the Loire after being bought off by Oskar in the autumn of 853, as the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* suggests he did, then it was Oskar's fleet that remained, whether now still under his leadership or not, and it was this force which was probably responsible for the raids over the next few years until the Scandinavians left the area for some years sometime after the summer of 857. There are, however, a couple of alternative views.

In general Ferdinand Lot presented the same chain of events as I have in this thesis. However, Lot believed that after being bought off on the island of *Betia* in 853 by some previously established, but completely unidentified, Northmen coming from Poitou,[4] Sidroc stayed in the

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[1] See E. Ashman Rowe, *Vikings in the West*, pp. 58, 129-30, for an argument against this fraternal relationship.
[2] For example, see C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Viking Kings*, chap. 8.
[3] Personal communication.
[4] F. Lot, 'Le soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 711, says that before arriving in Poitou these Northmen came from the 'South', from the Garonne or from the Charente, perhaps, he says, they were returning from Spain.

area for the next three years until he returned to the Seine in 856.[1] He thought that Sidroc, the leader of what he calls the 'Northmen of the Seine', had reconciled and joined forces with some unidentified 'Northmen of Aquitaine'. Together they not only raided near to the Breton monastery of Redon on the river Vilaine in late 853[2] (or early 854), but were also jointly responsible for the raids on 'the basin of the Loire and the Garonne' over the course of the next three years, until Sidroc took his fleet back to the Seine in the spring of 856.[3] After this, according to Lot, the 'Northmen of Aquitaine' remained behind and, having continued their 'sea piracy' for another year, they left on their second expedition to Spain, the Balearic Islands, the Rhone and Italy.[4] Chronologically Lot's reconstruction is quite possible, although it does involve ignoring the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium's* suggestion that Sidroc left the Loire shortly after the siege of *Betia*. Even more importantly Lot completely downplays Oskar, believing that the Fontenelle monk, writing twenty years after the events, had created a *romanesque* story and even a *véritable saga* surrounding Oskar.[5] He admits between clenched teeth, as he must, that Oskar had made two raids up the Seine in 841 and 851-52,[6] but he completely disregards or dismisses the statements of the *Chronicle of Fontenelle* connecting him with Aquitaine and Bordeaux, even though the Fontenelle monk on several occasions clearly demonstrates a much deeper understanding of events in both Brittany and Aquitaine at this time than does Prudentius. As a consequence of this Lot cannot even suggest who the Northmen in Lower Poitou in 852/53 were (who then first went on to the Loire).[7] After the siege of *Betia* they just merge with Sidroc's fleet and remain under Sidroc's overall leadership[8] until they rather miraculously re-emerge again as 'Northmen of Aquitaine' after Sidroc had taken his 'Northmen of the Seine' back to the Seine in 856. Furthermore, in regard to Oskar Lot cannot even suggest where he might have been active before, after or between his two appearances on

[1] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', pp. 693, 702-3; *idem*, 'Le soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 712.
[2] F. Lot, 'Sidroc sur la Loire', pp. 692-93.
[3] Here Lot prefers Prudentius's date (where no name is given) to that of the monk of Fontenelle, who names Sidroc.
[4] F. Lot, 'La soi-disant prise de Nantes', p. 712. For this second Scandinavian trip to Spain and the Mediterranean see, in the first instance, A. Christys, *Vikings in the South*, pp. 47-64.
[5] See for example F. Lot, 'Roric et ses incursions', pp. 684-85 and n. 24; *idem*, 'Études critiques sur l'abbaye de Saint-Wandrille'.
[6] Actually, it is quite apparent that Lot would really have liked to write 'Oscar' completely out of history.
[7] Except for saying they might had been the ones who came back from Spain [in 845], which actually they were but they had been elsewhere in the meantime, they had not remained on the Garonne (at Bordeaux?) or on the Charente.
[8] Although when he comes to mention the second Scandinavian attack on Bordeaux in 855 Lot says this was either conducted by Sidroc himself or by 'another fleet' (cf. 'Sidroc sur la Loire', p. 700). But having done this he is forced to add in a footnote (p. 700, n. 58) that he had already excluded those responsible being Oskar's fleet. Here again we see an attempt to distinguish between Sidroc's 'Northmen of the Seine' and some other unidentified 'Northmen of Aquitaine', even though Lot has repeatedly stated that Sidroc was the leader of the Scandinavian raiders on both 'the basin of the Loire and the Garonne' for three years, from 853 to 856.

the Seine, separated by over a decade. For Lot Oskar was just some minor and rather irritating raider who came out of thin air to raid along the Seine on two occasions before disappearing on both occasions back into a nebulous and unknowable ether.

Overall whilst I certainly agree with Lot that the siege of *Betia* took place in 853 I cannot concur with his theory that Sidroc then joined forces with the anonymous Northmen he had besieged and fought, and that together they were responsible for all the attacks on the Loire and in Aquitaine over the course of the next three years. Lot is quite willing to accept the testimony of the *Gesta* of Redon but not its writer's very clear statements that it was the besieged Northmen who came to the Vilaine (not both forces including Sidroc's) and that Sidroc left the Loire for the Seine just after the siege.

Finally, and more recently, Noël-Yves Tonnerre presented his brief reconstruction of these events.[1] Tonnerre places Sidroc's arrival and the fight with the Northmen encamped on *Betia* in 853. He suggests, however, that it was the Breton Erispoë who was trying to get rid of the Northmen but having not been able to do so he called in Sidroc's fleet to help. Tonnerre says: 'Incapable de prendre d'assaut un camp qui se trouve à quelques kilomètres des murs de Nantes, le chef breton [Erispoë] se résolut à pactiser avec un autre chef normand, Sidric, le résultat ne pouvait être que désastreux. Après avoir reçu de son concurrent danois une quantité appréciable de métal précieux, Sidric lâcha prise et quitta la Loire pour venir piller Redon.' At first glance Tonnerre's contention that it was Erispoë who could not dislodge the Northmen on *Betia*, and that it was he who then called on Sidroc to help him, seems appealing. But as was discussed in Chapter 4 why would Erispoë have believed that Sidroc would come to his aid to remove the Northmen on *Betia*? The problem is though that the *Gesta Sanctorum Rotonensium* says explicitly that it was Sidroc who proposed to Erispoë to join forces and not the other way around. Tonnerre accepts the main story told by the Redon monk but not the part concerning who had approached whom. More problematic is that Tonnerre says that after Sidroc had been bought off by the 'other' Northmen it was his fleet that went on to attack near Redon. But the *Gesta* clearly say it was not Sidroc's fleet that did this but it was, in fact, those Northmen who had been besieged. Another lurking assumption in this reconstruction is that allying with Sidroc's Northmen could not but turn out to be anything other than disastrous, which seems to me just an assumption that the Northmen were always treacherous and betrayed those they allied with, which in many cases is demonstrably not the case. After the siege of *Betia* and the pillages on the Vilaine and in the Vannetais, Tonnerre sees the Northmen (implicitly Sidroc's)

[1] See N.-Y. Tonnerre, *Naissance de la Bretagne*, pp. 270-72.

staying in the Nantais and Vannetais in the following years and making a succession of pillages which made life very hard for the 'roi breton'. He says it is not sure whether some 'Danegelds' were paid, but certainly the Northmen received some handsome ransoms for prestigious hostages - such as the bishop of Vannes and Pascweten.[1] The problem is that there are no reported attacks in southern Brittany in the years immediately following 853-854. Tonnerre does not explicitly spell out the reasoning for his assumption regarding continuing Scandinavian pillaging in south-eastern Brittany; it seems that it derives from the charter of July 857 discussed in Chapter 4 in which Pascweten reimbursed the community of Redon for the ransom they had paid for his release, which Tonnerre interprets as meaning that the monks had paid for Pascweten's release 'sans doute' in 856.[2] But although this was possibly so we cannot infer from it either that Pascweten was captured in 856 or that he was being held in the Vannetais when he was ransomed. Perhaps the other implicit reason for Tonnerre's reconstruction is that Pascweten had recompensed the monks of Redon with a *villa* (at *Bron Aril*), and a *saline* belonging to him in Guérande. Tonnerre does not explicitly mention this, but in connection with Pascweten's ransom he says that he possessed a residence on the Guérande peninsula called *aula Clis*; from which fact he says, 'il faut donc envisager une attaque des Normands sur le presqu'île',[3] which implies, but does not spell out, that Tonnerre thinks that Pascweten had been captured during this attack, perhaps even at his residence? Finally, Tonnerre makes mention of a Redon charter (no. 85) dated 17 June 862,[4] which relates to a donation made to the Redon community by Pascweten, and which shows that the monks already had a refuge at the edge of the forest at this time, one which once belonged to Erispoë's successor Salomon (actually at Plélan). This, he suggests, means that 'la passivité de Salomon au cours des premières années de son gouvernement [hence after 857] n'avait donc pas arrêté les incursions normandes'.[5] More was said about this charter in Chapter 6. It might well be that during their presence on the Loire between 853 and 857 the Northmen (I would say Oskar's, whether still under his leadership or not) had made an attack in the Vannetais and maybe even on Guérande, but we simply cannot assume, as Tonnerre seems to, that there was a distinct 'viking' fleet constantly making attacks in 'New Brittany' from 853 all the way through to, perhaps, the early 860s, for which there is no evidence at all.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 271.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 271, n. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 271, n. 3.
[4] See *Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 85, pp. 64-65.
[5] *Ibid.*, Tonnerre, p. 271, n. 4.

Appendix 2

AN INCURSION FROM THE LOIRE INTO NORTHERN NEUSTRIA IN 863?

As was explored in Chapter 6, after the mention of Robert the Strong in 862 hiring the Northmen who had recently come from the Seine to help him fight the Bretons and the rebellious young Louis 'the Stammerer' there are no reports of any further aggressive or even mercenary Scandinavian activities along the Loire or indeed elsewhere in France during the rest of the year. Nor are there any reported attacks in 863 until the attempt to capture Poitiers in December.

Simon Coupland, however, thinks that in 'in 863 there appears to have been an incursion in northern Neustria, since the community of St Maur fled from Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe [dep. Orne] to Burgundy and the relics of St Exuperius were transported from Bayeux to the as yet unidentified *castrum Palludellum* near Corbeil [dep. Essonne]'.[1] He then continues:

> It seems likely that it was also at this time that the canons of St Chrodegang and Ste Opportune abandoned *Monasteriolum*, probably Montreuil-la-Motte [dep. Orne], with the relics of their patrons. It is clear that the translations took place after 853, since both texts stated that Hildebrand was bishop of Sées at the time, but before 871, since the *Vita sancti Chrodogangi* was written by Archbishop Herard of Tours. Moreover, the fact that the community of St Chrodegang first travelled south, to Sées and then to St Céneri [dep. Orne], indicates that the Viking incursion from which they were fleeing came from the north and not from the Loire. Thirdly, both groups sought refuge in the east, the community of St Chrodegang at Pannecières [dep. Loiret] and the canons of Ste Opportune at Moussy-le-Neuf [dep. Seine-et-Marne], which implies that the Seine was free of Viking fleets at the time of the translations. Tradition also records that the body of St Leonard was taken from St Léonard-des-Bois [dep. Sarthe], only four kilometres from St Céneri, to Corbigny [dep. Nièvre] in Burgundy towards the end of Charles the Bald's reign. It is therefore plausible that the translation took place at the same time as that of St Chrodegang, in 863. There is no indication which Viking fleet was responsible for this incursion into northern Neustria, but it is significant that nothing is known of the

[1] S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 61.

> movements of the Vikings on the Loire at this time. It was evidently not the Loire Vikings who entered the Charente in the autumn and ravaged the Angoumois. This is above all apparent from the fact that Hincmar later explicitly distinguished between the 'Nortmanni residentes in Ligeri' and the 'Nortmannis qui in Carento ... resident'.[1]

So according to Coupland the purported incursion into northern Neustria in 863 'came from the north and not from the Loire' and not even from the Seine it seems; although he adds 'it is significant that nothing is known of the movements of the Vikings on the Loire at this time'. But later Coupland obviously changed his mind because after repeating much of the quote above (with slight changes)[2] he says in his as yet unpublished book based on his doctoral thesis *Charles the Bald*:

> It was almost certainly the Vikings from the Loire who carried out this incursion into northern Neustria, since nothing is known of their movements in 863.

Adding the somewhat modified words:

> Clearly, they should not be identified with the fleet which entered the Charente in the autumn of 863 and ravaged the Angoumois, since Hincmar later explicitly distinguished between the 'Northmen on the Loire' and the 'Northmen on the Charente'.[3]

The fact that Archbishop Hincmar does mention two fleets on the Loire and the Charente in 865 is of no relevance to matters in 863. Furthermore, I doubt any historian would suggest that sometime in late 863 the Northmen ravaging the Angoumois had broken off to make an incursion into northern Neustria.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

[2] S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 4: 'It seems likely that it was also at this time that the canons of St Chrodegang and Ste Opportune abandoned Montreuil-la-Motte (Orne) with the relics of their patrons. Certainly, the translations took place after 853 since Hildebrand was said to be bishop of Sées at the time, but before 871 since one of the texts describing the event, the *Vita sancti Chrodogangi*, was written by Archbishop Herard of Tours who died in that year. The translations also took place at a time when the Seine was free of Vikings, since the canons of Ste Opportune sought refuge at Moussy-le-Neuf (Seine-et-Marne), while the community of St Chrodegang first travelled south, to Sées and thence to St Céneri (Orne), then headed east, to Pannecières (Loiret). Tradition also records that the body of St Leonard was taken from St Léonard-des-Bois (Sarthe), only four kilometres from St Céneri, to Corbigny (Nièvre) towards the end of Charles the Bald's reign, and this presumedly occurred at the same time as the translation of St Chrodegang, in 863.'

[3] S. Coupland, *Unpublished book*, chap. 4.

Let us therefore look at these translations of Neustrian relics mentioned by Coupland one by one.[1] In doing so we should take heed of Lucien Musset's words when discussing these and other translations of saintly relics in *Normandie*:

> En examinant les dates des départs, on peut espérer d'abord apercevoir des ondes de panique qui se propageraient lors des raids des Vikings. Certes, le phénomène existe, mais il apparaît très minoritaire : la plupart des translations sont sans dates assurées, beaucoup sont « à répétition », entrecoupées de retours au point de départ, quand on avait l'illusion alors commune de n'avoir affaire qu'à un épisode, certes désastreux, mais cependant temporaire. Finalement, la chronologie des départs reste très souvent un problème insoluble, ainsi que celle des arrivées.[2]

First, the translation of the relics of Saint Exuperius from Bayeux to a place called *Palludellum*, supposedly near Corbeil (Corbeil-Essonnes, dep. Essonne, arr. Evry), is only told of in an early seventeenth-century compilation of hagiographical legends of Saint Exuperius and the third bishop of Bayeux 'Saint Loup' by Jean Bocquet, a canon of the church of Notre Dame, and, later, of Saint-Exuperius, both at Corbeil.[3] No date is given in these late hagiographies. In his

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[1] The case of the relics of Saint Leonard will not be discussed in detail here. It is true that his relics were taken in about 882 to Corbigny (dep. Nièvre), a priory which had been granted to Adalgar the bishop of Autun (along with the abbey of Flavigny) by Charles the Bald towards the end of his reign, actually by a grant on 23 February 877, confirmed in May by a bull of Pope John VIII and at the Synod of Ravenna in November of the same year. However, they seem to have been transferred from Tournus (dep. Saône-et-Loire) in Burgundy to Corbigny and we do not know when they had been removed from Saint-Léonard-des-Bois; the *Vita sancti Leonardi*, *AA*, *SS*, Octobris VII (Paris, 1869), pp. 47-48, says nothing on this matter. For the initial grant of Corbigny and its confirmations see *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. 1, no. 420, pp. 435-37; *Cartulaire de l'église d'Autun*, ed. A. de Charmasse (Autun, 1865), 1, no. 7, pp. 11-12, and no. 30, pp. 50-51; *The Cartulary of Flavigny 717-1113*, ed. C. Brittain Bouchard (Cambridge, Mass, 1991) no. 23, pp. 69-72; W. Hartmann, ed. *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien* (Paderborn, 1989), pp. 347-49; *RAC*, ed. Tessier, vol. II, no. 30. For the translation of Saint Leonard's relics to Corbigny see Falco, *Chronicon Trenorchiense*, in *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de Saint-Philibert*, ed. R. Poupardin, pp. 71-106, at p. 89. However, it needs to be said that this whole dossier remains very obscure, for which see in the first instance I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert*, pp. 168-73.

[2] L. Musset, 'Les translations de reliques en Normandie (IXe-XIIe siècles)', in P. Bouet and F. Neveux (eds.), *Les Saints dans la Normandie médiévale*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (26-29 septembre 1996)* (Caen, 2000), pp. 97-108, at p. 101.

[3] J. Bocquet, *Les vies de sainct Exupere et sainct Loup, vulgairement appelez S. Spire & S. Leu, premier et troisiesme euesque de Bayeux, la translation de leurs corps en la ville de Corbeil, et les miracles qui s'y font iusques à present par leur intercession* (Paris, 1627), p. 31. This is quoted by J. Lair, 'Études sur les origines de l'évêché de Bayeux', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 24 (1863), pp. 281-323, at p. 297: 'Post multa annorum curricula, quidam fidèles, in coenobio sancti Exuperii famulantes, venerabiles tam ipsius quam beati Luponis reliquias, ob tyrannidem infestantium Normannorum inde adsportantes, in quoddam castrum, nomine Palludellum transferentes, reposuerunt.' Another almost identical version of the legend of Saint Exuperius exists from 1614 written by Jean-Baptiste le Masson the archdeacon of Bayeux: see J.-B. le Masson, *La Vie de sainct Exupere, autrement sainct Spire, premier evesque de Bayeux et comme son corps et celuy de S. Loup furent portez et sauvez à Corbeil* (1614).

Memoriale historiarum the early fourteenth-century chronicler Jean de Saint-Victor[1] said that it was said in his time that this translation took place, in 863,[2] regarding which Jules Lair could only say this was an 'allégation que n'a rien de contraire aux vraisemblances'.[3] It is this date of 863 that Coupland uses. On the other hand, Jean Lebeuf cogently argued that this translation may have taken place in 963 and not in 863.[4] Yet even if Exuperius's relics were removed from Bayeux around the earlier date because of a Scandinavian 'infestation' this could only have happened in 858. Hincmar tells us under the year 859: 'These [Northmen] who were still on the Seine [...] had the previous year [hence in 858] slain Baltfrid bishop of Bayeux.'[5] Furthermore, in the prologue to his second book of *Miracles of Saint Philibert* the monk Ermentarius also tells of the 'Northmen' taking the town of Bayeux, and places this together with other activities of the Seine-based Northmen which happened in the late 850s, and, in fact, before he says that his community fled Cunault for Messais on 1 May 862.[6] We must, therefore, put aside Coupland's suggestion that the translation of the relics of Saint Exuperius from Bayeux was caused by a Scandinavian incursion from the Loire or elsewhere in 863.

Next let us briefly examine what caused the flight of the 'community of St Maur [...] from Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe to Burgundy', and particularly its possible date. As was mentioned in Chapter 6, it was undoubtedly the arrival of Northmen on the Loire that had provoked their initial flight from their monastery at Glanfeuil.[7]

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[1] A new edition and study of Jean de Saint-Victor's *Memoriale historiarum* is now available, see I. Guyot-Bachy, *Le 'Memoriale historiarum' de Jean de Saint-Victor. Un historien et sa communauté au début du XIVe siècle* (Turnhout, 2000).

[2] Cited by J. Lair, 'Études sur les origines de l'évêché de Bayeux', p. 297.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] J. Lebeuf, *Histoire de la ville et de tout le diocèse de Paris*, 15 vols (Paris, 1745–1760), vol. 11, pp. 170-71.

[5] *AB* 859: ed. Grat, p. 81; trans. Nelson, p. 91. See also J. Le Maho, 'Un exode de reliques dans les pays de la basse Seine à la fin du IXe siècle', *Bulletin de la Commission Départementale des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime*, vol. XLVI (1998), pp. 136-88, at p. 138.

[6] Ermentarius, *Miracles of Saint Philibert*: ed. Poupardin, p. 62.

[7] For which see Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, pp. 461-72. According to Odo the exodus of the monks from Glanfeuil happened in his own time: 'Igitur nostro iam tempore' (*ibid*., p. 471). J.-P. Devroey in his excellent article 'La villa Floriacus et la présence de l'abbaye des Fossés en Rémois durant le Haut Moyen Âge, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 82. 4 (2004), pp. 809-838, at p. 815, n. 26, points out that the 'Sermo de mirabilibus gestis sive de translatione corporis sanctissimi Mauri abbatis (BHL 5779) est plus précis en affirmant qu'Eudes était à la tête de Saint-Maur lorsqu'il dut "abandonner aux barbares du Nord un monastère chèrement aimé".' He takes this from F. Landreau's translation of a part of this sermon, see F. Landreau, 'Les vicissitudes de l'abbaye de Saint-Maur aux huitième et neuvième siècles (Fin)', *L'Anjou historique*, 5. 4 (1905), pp. 337-56, at p. 343: 'Le vénérable abbé Odon, y est-il dit, était à la tête de Saint-Maur, quand éclata une violente persécution. Pour sauver sa vie et celle de ses frères, il dut abandonner aux barbares du nord un monastère chèrement aimé et emporter au loin le corps du disciple de saint Benoît [...]' However what Devroey does not say is that this sermon was written in about 1030 by Abbot Odo III of Fossés (and not as Landreau, *ibid*., p. 343 and nn. 3, 4, would have it shortly after the death of Charles the Bald), and Odo III quite deliberately changes Odo of Glanfeuil's story in many ways; for which see in the first instance J. B. Wickstrom, 'Claiming St. Maurus of Glanfeuil: an 11th-Century Sermon from Fossés'.

This most probably happened in 862.[1] For what it is worth the late eleventh-century *Chronica Rainaldi archidiaconi Andecavensis* says: 'Anno 862, ossa beati Mauri a loco sepulturae sunt effossa propter metum Nortmannorum [the bones of Saint Maur were dug up because of the fear of the Northmen]: et prius per diversa loca aliquot annis deportata, tandem iussu Karoli regis in Fossatensi monasterio deposita sunt.'[2] After the death of Abbot Theodrad of Glanfeuil in 861 Odo became the abbot of the community of Saint-Maur.[3] Odo (who is often called in subsequent historiography Odo of Glanfeuil) wrote both a *Life* and a *Little Book of Miracles* of Saint Maur in about 869 after the community finally arrived at Fossés in November 868. He says that because of the Northmen he led his community from Glanfeuil, taking the saint's body with them. They first went to Échemiré (dep. Maine-et-Loire), where they were delayed for some days (*per aliquot dies*), before he and the community (still with Saint Maur's bones) moved on to the *villa* of *Merula*, Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe (dep. Orne) in the *pagus* of Sées[4] which had previously been given to them by Charles the Bald at the suggestion of Bishop

[1] This date is proposed by almost all historians who have ever seriously considered the matter; see for example: F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 474, and n. 5, pp. 474-76; W. Vogel, *Die Normannen*, p. 191; H. Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), vol. 1, p. 972; F. Landreau, 'Les vicissitudes de l'abbaye de Saint-Maur', p. 343; L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées au temps des invasions Normandes', *Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne*, LXXXVIII (1970), pp. 3-22, at p. 8. Despite citing all the evidence that Odo and the community at Glanfeuil left in 862, as did those from Cunault and those of Saint-Florent at Glonne, J.-P. Devroey, 'La villa Floriacus', p. 817, hesitates between 862 and 861 for the departure date from Glanfeuil. It would seem to me that he thinks the earlier date is possible because of his statement (*ibid.*) that 'les méfaits des Normands sur la Loire duraient depuis cinq années', which I imagine is a reference to a comment of the monk Ermentarius referenced in F. Landreau, 'Les vicissitudes de l'abbaye de Saint-Maur', p. 344 and n. 2, but which, as was shown in Chapter 6, is not correct, and Devroey does rather go against his immediately preceding and quite correct observation that 'au printemps 862, la menace des Vikings entraîna les abbayes ligériennes et leurs reliques dans un exode général. Déjà chassés deux fois par les barbares, les moines de Noirmoutier avaient trouvé refuge à Cunault, non loin de Glanfeuil. Le Ier mai 862, ils emportèrent avec eux les reliques de nombreux saints. Ils étaient accompagnés par les moines de l'abbaye toute proche de Saint-Florent de Glonne'. Of course, it might have been that Odo and the Glanfeuil community had been more far-sighted than their neighbouring Loire-based brothers, but I doubt it. An initial departure from the Loire in 862 is thus certainly to be preferred to 861.

[2] *Chronica Rainaldi archidiaconi Andecavensi*, in *Annales angevines et vendômoises*, ed. L. Halphen, p. 82. This late report is quite clearly itself based on Odo of Glanfeuil's story.

[3] Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, p. 471. J.-P. Devroey, 'La villa Floriacus', p. 815, says: 'La fin de l'abbatiat de Teodrad fut marquée par les méfaits des laïques qui ravageaient les domaines du monastère, et par les premières entreprises des Normands.'

[4] Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, p. 471: 'Igitur nostro iam tempore, cum, insequentibus nos Normannis, huius beati viri corpus de monasterio asportassemus, plura per eum fieri miracula vidimus et, licet in tristibus positi, gaudio gavisi sumus. Nam cum in villa Scamerato per aliquot dies demorati fuissemus, et frequens conventus populi in aecclesiam eiusdem loci, in qua sancti custodiebatur gleba, conflueret [...]. Ex eo ergo loco, comitante nos populi multitudine, qui undique ex vicis et agris nobis obviam precipites confluebant, in pagum Sagensem cum sacro devenimus thesauro.' J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus* (Collegeville, MN, 2009), pp. 139, 141: 'Indeed in our own day, we witnessed even more miracles performed through his power as we carried the relics of the blessed man away from the monastery with the Northmen in pursuit. And although we were in unhappy circumstances, we nonetheless greatly rejoiced. We had been delayed for some days in the village of Scamerato and the people flocked into the church where the remains of the saint were being kept [...] From there we arrived with the sacred treasure into the neighbourhood of Sées.'

Ebroin, where Odo tells us they stayed for 'one and a half years',[1] before moving on to Burgundy, and later after further peregrinations to the mother abbey of Fossés (dep. Val-de-Marne) where they arrived in November 868.[2]

The arrival at Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe took place while Hildebrand was the bishop of Sées, which he was between 853 and 883.[3] Lucien Musset summarises what happened:

> Quittant leur monastère des bords de la Loire, les moines de Saint-Maur, porteurs du corps de leur saint patron, arrivèrent au diocèse de Sées. L'évêque, parti en expédition contre les Vikings avec le roi Charles le Chauve, ne put les accueillir, mais son archidiacre les installa dans l'église de Saint-Julien-sur-Sarthe, dépendance de la villa du Mesle-sur-Sarthe, donnée peu auparavant à Saint-Maur par le roi. Ils n'y restèrent pas longtemps ; après de nombreux miracles, les moines gagnèrent la Bourgogne en 863,[4] puis, plus tard,

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[1] Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, p. 471: 'Et quia sanctus pontifex Hildebrannus, generali expeditione universo populo contra Normannos indicta occupatus, ad suscipiendum componendumque pro tempore hoc sancti viri corpus presens adesse non potuit, archidiaconum sanctae suae sedis cum electiori parte sancti cleri ad villam quae Merula noncupatur, quam munifica largitate serenissimus rex Karolus ad suggestionem sancti pontificis Hebroini beato Mauro et eius famulis per magnificentiae celsitudinis suae contulerat preceptum, cum omni aecclesiasticorum honore et apparatu ministeriorum destinatum habuit, qui nobiscum sancti viri glebam religioso satis in aecclesia beati Iuliani reconderet obsequio; ubi per annum integrum et dimidium quanta valuimus hoc sancti viri corpus diligentia custodivimus.' J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, p. 141: 'Because the holy bishop, Hildebrand, was occupied with a large expedition against the Northmen that had been announced to the entire population, he was unable to be present to welcome the holy man's relics or to arrange for their temporary housing. He had therefore ordered the archdeacon of his holy see and selected members of the sacred clergy, to assemble - with all ecclesiastical honors and liturgical accoutrements - at an estate called Merolles, which in his generous largess, the most serene king Charles had granted to Blessed Maurus and his servants by an edict of the holy bishop Ebroin. There, along with us, the archdeacon deposited the reliquary of the holy man in the church of Saint Julian with a fitting religious ceremony. For a year and a half, with great care, we maintained the veneration of the holy man's relics there as well as we could.'

[2] Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*., pp. 471-72; J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, pp. 141-43.

[3] L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées au temps des invasions Normandes', *Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne*, 88 (1970), pp. 3-22, at p. 8. Hildebrand attended the synod at Soissons in 853.

[4] This date is given in a covering letter Odo of Glanfeuil wrote to the archdeacon Adelmod of Le Mans, to which he attached his *Life of Saint-Maur* and his *Little Book of Miracles*. The letter says (Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, p. 463): 'Cum circumcirca cuncta poene loca nobis contigua effera natio Normannorum ferali rabie populans incendioque concremans vastaret, nosque vis et atrocitas barbarica obtata pepulisset tel lure ac pristinis miserabiliter privasset sedibus, nec ullus uspiam refugii nobis tutus superesset locus, consilio tandem servandae vitae cum corpore eiusdem sancti Mauri partes Burgundiae petere decrevimus. Cumque in predium inlustris viri Audonis comitis citra fluvium quem Ararim vocant devenissemus, quod nobis ob reverentiam et amorem sancti corporis sive etiam pro aeterna remuneratione aliquandiu ad habitandum concesserat, benigno favore ibidem commorantium ac munifica largitate excepti, anno dominicae incarnationis octingentesimo sexagesimo tercio, indictione decima, digno cum honore, congruo illud et apto condidimus loco.' J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, pp. 59-60: 'The savage race of Northmen had laid waste almost all the possessions that remained to us in the neighborhood and, raging, burned them down. Their strength and barbaric cruelty drove us out of our chosen homeland and miserably deprived us of our former habitation, nor did a safe refuge remain anywhere for us. Finally, in a plan designed to save our lives, we decided to make for the territories of Burgundy, carrying the body of the holy Maurus. We came thus to the estate of the illustrious personage, Count Audonus, on this side of the river called the Saône, which he gave to us to live in for a while out of reverence and love for the holy body as well as for an eternal reward. By his kind favour and magnanimous largess, we were

le monastère de Fossés, près de Paris.[1]

Leaving to one side the fact that Odo of Glanfeuil does not actually say that Hildebrand was with Charles the Bald on this expedition, one tricky issue with all this is which expedition ('generali expeditione universo populo contra Normannos') is being referred to by Odo?[2] If the community of Saint-Maur had reached Burgundy sometime in (late?) 863, as Odo says it did, then Hildebrand's absence from Sées must definitely be dated to sometime in 862. But as Lot rightly noted: 'A ce moment [the autumn of 862 according to him here], il n'y a aucune "expédition générale" contre les Normands.'[3] The only real 'expedition' King Charles undertook against the Northmen in 862 was very early in the year against those Northmen who had attacked Meaux on the northerly river Marne, and this was before all the Northmen left the Seine in late March 862, and before the majority of them (including Weland's fleet no doubt) came to the Loire where they were hired by Robert the Strong.[4] Thus if Musset's and others' chronology is correct the only occasion I can presently see when Hildebrand may have been away taking part in an expedition against the Northmen is in the early spring of 862 when Robert, who had after all since 861 become what we might call the marquis of Neustria and thus Hildebrand's 'lord',[5] had captured twelve ships of the Northmen who had returned from 'Spain' on the Loire as told of by Archbishop Hincmar.[6] If this is correct it might suggest that Odo and his community having first fled Glanfeuil in early 862 'for fear' of the Northmen who had returned from Spain,[7] as certainly had other Loire-based monastic communities, and that shortly thereafter Bishop Hildebrand had joined with Robert the Strong to oppose them. Another option, proposed by Ferdinand Lot, is that the 'expédition générale du peuple entier contre les Normands', as he translates Odo's words, may be referring to the great assembly at Pîtres in June 862 to which King Charles had ordered the magnates and bishops of his realm to come with workmen and carts in order to construct fortifications on the Seine, required 'because

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allowed to dwell there for a time. So in the year of the Lord's Incarnation 863, in the tenth indiction, we placed the body in a suitable place with befitting solemnity.'

[1] L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', p. 8.

[2] J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, p. 141, translates this as that Hildebrand 'was occupied with a large expedition against the Northmen that had been announced to the entire population'.

[3] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', pp. 474-76, n. 5. Here Lot pushes back the time when Hildebrand was away from the autumn to the summer or even the spring of 862.

[4] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 90; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

[5] *AB* 861: ed. Grat, p. 86; trans. Nelson, p. 95; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 196; H. Noizet, 'L'ascension du lignage robertien: du val de Loire à la Francie', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de France (année 2004)* (2006), pp. 19-35, at p. 21: 'Ce n'est qu'en 861 qu'il [Robert] se soumit et reçut en échange le commandement de la marche de Neustrie: celle-ci incluait la possession de divers comtés, Anjou, Blois, Tours et Autun.'

[6] *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 91; trans. Nelson, p. 99.

[7] Perhaps even 'with the Northmen in pursuit' as Odo at one point says.

of the Northmen'.[1] Lot suggests that Hildebrand residing in a country menaced by 'pirates' cannot but have attended this assembly; although he adds this is just a hypothesis the arguments he presents are somewhat seductive and Hildebrand was indeed at Pîtres in June 862.[2] However that Herard would describe this assembly as a 'general expedition against the Northmen' might be doubted.

But at the end of the day what had prompted Odo and his community to leave Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe in 863? Devroey says: 'Ils la [Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe] quittèrent, car on les harcelaient [by the pagan Northmen] sans cesse, de crainte que leur présence n'attirât sur le pays de nouvelles dévastations des païens.'[3] This remark is based on Odo's undated comment that: 'Cum vero et illic creberrimis et improvisis paganorum deterreremur eruptionibus, , secundum quod in epistola huic opusculo preposita continetur, hoc sancti viri corpus, citra fluvium Ararim a nobis deportatum, digno cum honore, prout temporis et loci permisit oportunitas, reconditum ac collocatum in fundo Audonis comitis est: ubi per tres semis annos custoditum [...]',[4] which John Wickstrom translates as: 'We were driven away from there [Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe], however, through fear of unexpected and repeated [or repetitions of?] pagan incursions, as it is recorded in the letter that prefaces this little work. So we carried the relics of the holy man to this side of the Saône River, where they were placed on the property of count Audonis and housed with due reverence (insofar as the circumstances permitted). For a year and a half they were kept there [...].'[5]

There were certainly still many Northmen on the Loire in 863 and maybe it was indeed their continuing presence and the fear of unexpected attacks by them on Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe that prompted the departure of the community of Saint-Maur for Burgundy. But what cannot be inferred from this is that there was actually an incursion into northern Neustria in this year. It is equally possible, and not at all contradictory, that the community was also just seeking more attractive pastures new, and the lands given to them in Burgundy by Count Odo of Troyes-Châteaudun (d. 870)[6] may have seemed a better prospect than staying as a guest of Bishop Hildebrand in Sées at their small *villa* at Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe.

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[1] F. Lot, 'La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine', p. 475, n. 2. *AB* 862: ed. Grat, p. 91; trans. Nelson, p. 100.
[2] See W. Hartmann, ed. *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich*, pp. 114, 118, 120.
[3] J.-P. Devroey, 'La villa Floriacus', pp. 817-18, although he gives a wrong attribution here.
[4] Odo of Glanfeuil, *Ex Odonis miraculis s. Mauri*, p. 471.
[5] J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, p. 142.
[6] Count Odo was a member of the extended Robertian family (likely being a brother of Robert Portecarquois of Troyes). It is even possible, although there is no proof at all, that Count Odo's grant of lands in his domain to the community of Saint-Maur was in some way occasioned by his Robertian relationships (including, indeed, with Robert the Strong). Furthermore, Odo of Glanfeuil and his predecessor Abbot Theodrad were also both related to Count Odo (and hence the Robertians) as well as to the Rorgonids; these family relationships might, as F. Landreau, 'Les vicissitudes de l'abbaye de Saint-Maur', p. 346, put it, 'permet d'expliquer facilement comment

Turning our attention now to the translations of the relics of Saint Chrodegang and his sister Sainte Opportune,[1] we know something of the translation of their relics from *Monasteriolum* just east of Falaise (Montreuil-la-Motte/Montreuil-la-Cambe, dep. Orne, cant. Trun) from two authentic sources as Lucien Musset calls them. First, there is a *Vita sancti Chrodogangi* written by Herard the archbishop of Tours from 856 to 871,[2] and second there is a *Vita et miracula Sanctae Opportunae* written by Adalhelm, an exiled bishop of Sées writing the end of the ninth century.[3] In regard to the relics of Chrodegang, Musset summarises:

> Les restes de Godegrand ont d'abord été emmenés de *Monasteriolum* à Sées, puis de là à Saint-Céneri-le-Gérei (Orne, canton d'Alençon) et enfin à Pannecières (sans doute Loiret, canton de Malesherbes), où ils restèrent sans doute quelque temps ; finalement ils aboutirent à Moussy-le-Neuf (Seine-et-Marne, canton de Dammartin-en-Goëlle), qui fut un moment la résidence de repli des évêques de Sées chassés de leur diocèse (le domaine leur fut donné par Louis le Germanique sans doute avant 876).[4]

And elsewhere Musset says that the relics of Chrodegang

> reposa à *Monasteriolum* jusqu'à l'arrivée des Vikings. Devant leur menace, l'évêque Hildebrand fit d'abord transférer sa dépouille dans la cité épiscopale, puis, au bout de peu de temps, dans un petit monastère (*cella*) de Saint-Céneri, qui est presque certainement

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les religieux de Saint-Maur furent amenés, vers 862, à entrer en relations avec ce seigneur [Count Odo] et ainsi à se réfugier sur une de ses terres'. This is not the place to enter into detailed prosopographical discussions, for which see in the first instance É. de Saint-Phalle, 'Comtes de Troyes et de Poitiers au IXe siècle: histoire d'un double échec'; J.-P. Devroey, 'La villa Floriacus', pp. 818-19; J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 196; K. F. Werner, 'Untersuchungen'; R. Le Jan, 'Structures familiales et politiques au IXe siècle: un groupe familial de l'aristocratie franque', *Revue Historique*, 265.2 (1981), pp. 289-333, at pp. 312-17; *eadem*, *Famille et pouvoir dans le monde franc*, pp. 213, 256, n. 230; F. Landreau, 'Les vicissitudes de l'abbaye de Saint-Maur', pp. 346-48; J. B. Wickstrom, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Maurus*, p. 21, n. 33; K. Voigt, *Die karolingische Klosterpolitik und der Niedergang des Westfrankischen Königtums: Laienäbte und Closterinhaber* (Stuttgart, 1917), p. 182.

[1] For which see L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées' pp. 8, 10-11; *idem*, 'Les premiers temps de l'abbaye d'Almenèches, des origines au XIIe siècle', in Dom Y. Chaussy (ed.), *L'Abbaye d'Almenèches - Argentan et sainte Opportune, sa vie et son culte* (Paris, 1970), pp. 11-36, esp. pp. 13-15; *idem*, 'Les translations de reliques en Normandie', pp. 97-108, at p. 103.

[2] Herard of Tours, *Vita sancti Chrodogangi episcopi Sagiensis martyris*, *AA*, *SS*, Septembris I (Paris, 1868), pp. 763-73, at c. 12-15, pp. 770-71. L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', p. 8 and n. 13.

[3] See Adalhelm of Sées, *Miracula sanctae Opportunae* : *De Sancta Opportuna Abbatissa Sagiensis in Gallia*, *AA*, *SS*, Aprilis III (Paris, 1866), pp. 62-73, at pp. 68-69. The life (and works) of Adalhelm is worthy of more attention than it has hitherto received, particularly because regarding the Northmen as Julia Smith says he was 'appointed by Charles the Fat (ruled 884-87)', but 'within a year of being appointed he was captured by Viking pirates, whose raids on northwestern France were by this time so intense that his predecessor, Bishop Hildebrand, had had to flee to find refuge at Moussy-le-Neuf (just northeast of Paris), taking the relics of Opportuna with him'. See J. M. H. Smith, 'Pilgrimage and spiritual healing in the ninth century', in M. Rubin (ed.), *Medieval Christianity in Practice* (Princeton, 2009), pp. 222-28, at p. 224.

[4] L. Musset, 'Les translations de reliques en Normandie', p. 103.

Saint-Céneri-le-Gérei (Orne, cant. Alençon). Quelques jours plus tard, un 3 avril, il fallut continuer le voyage jusqu'à un lieu appelé *Paniciarias*, qui doit être Pannecières (Loiret, cant. Malesherbes).[1]

This more brings out the fact that Archbishop Herard does actually link this translation to the menace of the Northmen.[2]

But when did the monks with the relics of Chrodegang leave Monasteriolum and then Sées for Pannecières? Archbishop Herard tells us that it happened when Hildebrand was the bishop of Sées.[3] Hildebrand was already bishop of Sées in 853;[4] he died in about 883 and was succeeded by Adalhelm.[5] Musset places the evacuation of the relics of Chrodegang from the 'pays de Sées' in 'about 870 or a little before'.[6] Although this is just an informed guess on Musset's part it does rather highlight that we cannot simply assume that their 'evacuation' took place in 863, as does Coupland. If we look for a time when we know the Northmen were in nearby areas and could threaten the community in Sées we might look at 865 when we know 'Northmen on the Loire joined forces with Bretons and attacked Le Mans. They sacked it without opposition, and went back to their ships',[7] and later in the same year that: 'On 29 December a contingent of those Northmen who were based on the Loire broke out into Neustria to plunder. They attacked Counts Gauzfrid, Harvey and Rorgo who were coming up together against them. In the fight Gauzfrid's brother Rorgo was killed, and the Northmen fled back to their ships having lost a great many of their men,'[8] or even to the autumn of 866 when Hincmar wrote: 'Northmen, about 400 of them, allied with the Bretons, came up from the Loire with their horses, attacked Le Mans and sacked it.'[9] While such dates for the removal of Chrodegang's relics are also mere conjectures they do at least relate to attested raids into northern Neustria whereas there is no supporting evidence for an imagined incursion in 863. Regarding Sainte Opportune, at some point between 885 and 890 we know that her relics together with those of her brother Chrodegang were taken by Hildebrand's successor Adalhelm to Moussy-le-Neuf (dep. Seine-et-Marne, cant. Dammartin-en-Goëlle).[10] It is possible, but not

[1] L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', p. 10.
[2] See Herard, *Vita sancti Chrodogangi episcopi Sagiensis martyris*, *AA, SS*, Septembris I, p. 170.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] As noted above he attended the synod at Soissons in 853.
[5] L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', p. 10. I am not as sure as Musset about the year 883.
[6] *Ibid*., p. 9.
[7] *AB* 865: ed. Grat, p. 124; trans. Nelson, p. 128.
[8] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, p. 125; trans. Nelson, p. 129.
[9] *AB* 866: ed. Grat, pp. 130-31; trans. Nelson, p. 135.
[10] L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', pp. 10-11.

completely sure, that her relics were originally removed from *Monasteriolum* at the same time as her brother's. We also cannot be sure if her relics followed the same route as Chrodegang's to Moussy-le-Neuf.[1] In summary there is no real evidence that Chrodegang's relics, and perhaps his sister's as well, were removed from *Monasteriolum* in 863, it is purely Coupland's conjecture. It is more likely but still not certain that this translation happened in 865 or even in 866.

To sum up, several monastic communities did leave the Loire region in 862 because of the reappearance of Scandinavian forces. However, there is very little or no evidence that there was a general flight of communities from 'northern Neustria' in 863 caused by a major 'incursion' into the area, whether this emanated 'from the north and not from the Loire' as Coupland first suggested, or 'almost certainly from the Loire' which is his more recent opinion. Of course, we cannot categorically exclude that groups of Northmen from the Loire did make forays north of the river in 863, whether for pillage or supplies (which amount to the same thing), but if these had been on any grand scale we would doubtless have heard something of them from Archbishop Hincmar, as we do in the years 865 and 866.

[1] Compare L. Musset, 'Les translations de reliques en Normandie', p. 103, 'Quant aux reliques d'Opportune, elles suivirent, semble-t-il, le même cheminement jusqu'à Moussy ; de là certaines furent réparties en Beauvaisis (Saint-Leu-d'Esserent), surtout à Paris et à Senlis, voire à Vendôme', with L. Musset, 'L'exode des reliques du diocèse de Sées', p. 11: 'Les reliques d'Opportune eurent une destinée plus heurtée et plus confuse. On décèle des passages vraisemblablement bref, à Paris et à Senlis dès les années 880 […].'

Appendix 3

THE FOUNDATION OF THE ABBEY AT MAILLEZAIS AND A 'FRAGMENT OF THE BISHOPS OF PÉRIGUEUX'

In Chapter 15 the likelihood of Northmen being active along the coasts of Aquitaine in the 960s to 970s was examined. It was concluded that they certainly were - going to and returning from northern Iberia - although there is no reliable evidence for any major activity or battles in Gascony in this period, but even this is not completely out of the question. But what of any presence around this time north of the Gironde/Garonne, in Poitou or even Périgord?

Here I will very briefly introduce two other late pieces of evidence which seem to suggest that Northmen were causing anxiety in Lower Poitou around this time, and even further inland around Périgueux later in the tenth century - possibly in the 980s.[1] The first is the story or legend about the foundation of an abbey at Maillezais in the Vendée (in the present Marais Poitevin) written by a monk called Pierre between 1067 and 1072-1073.[2] The second is what is known as the *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux*, originally written at the very earliest at the end of the twelfth century.

There is an abundant literature on the monk Pierre and his story of the foundation of the abbey at Maillezais. Restricting ourselves to only those parts of the foundation legend which specifically mention Northmen, Pierre of Maillezais writes: 'En tout cas, il y eut un peuple du Nord (*Aquilonalis certe gentis*), je veux dire les Normands (*Normanni*), race d'hommes connus pour être toujours prêts à persécuter sans mesure les autres peuples par les pillages, les incendies et les rapines ; ils prirent l'habitude de remonter fréquemment le susdit fleuve [la Sèvre] en mettant à mort et en dépouillant de leurs biens tous ceux qu'ils pouvaient trouver sur leur chemin. On chante (*cantatur*) qu'une grande partie de ces colliberts fut détruite par le glaive des Normands, non sans que ceux-ci aient subi un grand massacre des leurs.'[3] Pierre describes the island site where the monastery was built and the savage local inhabitants called 'colliberts'. The text continues by reporting 'la construction par le duc d'Aquitaine Guillaume Fier-à-Bras (963-995),[4] venu se livrer à la chasse, d'une fortification sur l'île parce qu'il lui était

[1] These stories perhaps deserve more attention than I can give here.
[2] According to Georges Pon and as followed by others.
[3] Cited by P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 9, from Pierre of Maillezais: *La fondation de l'abbaye de Maillezais. Récit du moine Pierre,* eds. and trans. Y. Chauvin and G. Pon (La Roche-sur-Yon, 2001), pp. 94-95.
[4] For William Fier-à-Bras (*Ferox brachium* in Latin, usually Proud-Arm or Iron-Arm in English) see in the first instance A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou*, pp. 99-139; B. S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra, the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (Berkeley, 1993); É. Carpentier, 'Un couple tumultueux en Poitou à la fin du Xe siècle :

« impossible d'ignorer la rage des Normands (*Normannorum rabies*) » et afin de « réprimer la férocité (*feritas*) de ceux-ci »'.[1]

When approximately had all these raids up the Sèvre (Sèvre Niortaise) taken place and when had they been confronted by the local colliberts? And was there still, or had there recently been, a close Scandinavian presence which would have made the monk Pierre state that William Fier-à-Bras built a small *castrum* next to the monastery because he could not 'ignore the rage of the Northmen', and in order to 'quell/suppress their ferocity'?

Pierre Bauduin says: 'Si l'on ignore la réalité et le moment de l'affrontement relaté entre les « colliberts » et les « Normands », la menace viking dans cette région au IXe siècle, et encore dans la seconde moitié du Xe siècle ou au début du XIe siècle, n'est nullement exclue.'[2] As has been seen in earlier chapters there certainly were 'viking' activities and raids in this region during the middle-decades of the ninth century, and quite likely also in 930 whilst later Northmen were on their way to the Limousin. The raids into Aquitaine at the beginning of the eleventh century were discussed in Chapter 16. Regarding the 'second half of the tenth century', as was explored in Chapter 15, in 966 (or 965) a viking fleet certainly would have passed along the coast of Aquitaine and most likely through the *Golfe des Pictons* (a good part of which is now the drained Marais Poitevin) on its way to Iberia and these Northmen were heading back North in the early 970s. If William Fier-à-Bras started building his *castrum* at Maillezais at the same time as the commencement of the work on the monastery (which is an assumption), hence in about 968-970, it could have been those Northmen who passed nearby in *c*.966 who had prompted him to do so, and thus his not ignoring 'the rage of the Northmen' and in order to 'quell/suppress their ferocity'; but possibly this was more in anticipation than in reality. Regarding the fight of some Northmen with the colliberts it should be noted here that the monk Pierre said that this was 'sung' (*cantatur*), meaning no doubt an oral tradition which could go back a long way, but how far back we do not know. Thus, we cannot exclude that such a confrontation happened, although when precisely will likely always remain unclear. In regard to the defeat of the colliberts Bauduin then makes a rare and very tentative speculation: 'La défaite des manants [the colliberts] met mieux en relief l'action du duc, qui dans le passage suivant, assure la protection des lieux : c'est à lui, plus qu'aux colliberts, auxquels on reconnaît tout de même une certaine efficacité, que revient la défense et la reprise en main du pays.

Guillaume de Poitiers et Emma de Blois', in M. Rouche (ed.), *Mariage et sexualité au Moyen Âge : accord ou crise? : colloque international de Conques* (Paris, 2000), pp. 203-15.

[1] P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 9.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 10.

Conjecturer que les hommes de Nord ont pu être employé par les puissants pour ramener à l'ordre une population sur laquelle, manifestement, nul n'avait prise serait sans doute s'aventurer au-delà de ce que dit le moine Pierre.'[1] Indeed.

In her excellent article 'La légende de fondation de Maillezais' Edina Bozóky concentrates on the legendary aspects of the story of the foundation and the similarities with stories in Normandy.[2] Regarding the vikings, she only has this to say: 'Dans le récit de Maillezais […] les références aux ravages des Vikings suggèrent que la première église dont les ruines sont retrouvées remontait à une époque « antique », probablement carolingienne.' But when in the Carolingian period, which was still in progress?

In an equally fine study entitled 'Les ducs d'Aquitaine et l'abbaye de Maillezais (vers 970-vers 1100)', Sylvie Refalo says about Maillezais and the Northmen, 'Pierre de Maillezais nous donne une piste lorsqu'il écrit qu'une fois arrivée sur l'île, il était impossible au comte « d'ignorer la rage des Normands ». En effet, le Bas-Poitou et la zone géographique de Maillezais ont eu à souffrir au IXe siècle, puis au Xe siècle, des incursions normandes. Même s'il ne faut pas exagérer la vision dramatique des invasions laissées par les scribes et les chroniqueurs monastiques, ce serait une erreur de nier leur existence'.[3] Indeed so. She then goes on to give a quick summary of some of the attacks in Poitou and in neighbouring regions in the ninth century but provides nothing on the tenth century. She then sums up: 'Ainsi, même si l'on ne souhaite pas exagérer la vision monastique, il n'en reste pas moins que le Poitou, et plus encore le Bas-Poitou, payent un lourd tribut aux invasions. Les mentions de territoires vacants et de ruines dans les actes poitevins du Xe siècle,[4] le laps de temps mis par les moines pour revenir dans leurs établissements d'origine,[5] voire leur non-retour confirment cette impression. Il y a donc une menace réelle qui explique que, sur les conseils d'Emma, le comte décide de transformer son relais de chasse en forteresse défensive face aux envahisseurs.' All well and

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[1] *Ibid*.

[2] E. Bozóky, 'La légende de fondation de Maillezais', in C. Teffort and M. Tranchant (eds.), *L'Abbaye de Maillezais. Des moines de marais aux soldats huguenots* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 17-27. See also for the connections with the Normandy stories P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 523, n. 2.

[3] S. Refalo, 'Les ducs d'Aquitaine et l'abbaye de Maillezais (vers 970 - vers 1100)', in C. Teffort and M. Tranchant (eds.), *L'Abbaye de Maillezais. Des moines de marais aux soldats huguenots* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 319-42.

[4] I would refer here to the discussion of Niort in Chapter 13.

[5] For a questioning of this sort of idea see A. Trumbore Jones, 'Pitying the Desolation of Such a Place: Rebuilding Religious Houses and Constructing Memory in Aquitaine in the Wake of the Viking Incursions', *Viator*, 37 (2006), pp. 85-102; L. Bourgeois, 'La mise en défense des monastères à l'époque carolingienne: les exemples de Saint-Hilaire de Poitiers (Vienne) et de Saint-Maixent (Deux-Sèvres)', in M. Lauwers (ed.), *Monastères et espace social. Genèse et transformation d'un système de lieux dans l'Occident médiéval*, *Actes de la table ronde de Nice, 18-19 avril 2008* (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 473-502; *idem*, 'La fortification des abbayes et des collégiales aux IXe-Xe siècles : quelques pistes de recherche', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis*, 95 (2018), pp. 193-208.

good, but Refalo provides no evidence that there was any near contemporary 'menace réelle' in the area which prompted William to transform his hunting lodge into a fortress. The only very circumspective evidence for this possibility is what was discussed Chapter 15.[1]

Overall, therefore, it is not at all impossible that the monk Pierre's story of William building a fortification (or actually converting an existing hunting lodge) next to the abbey being founded at Maillezais because of a fear of possible viking incursions contains a germ of truth. On the other hand, William, like his tenth-century predecessors as counts of Poitiers, built many other fortifications near religious foundations in Poitou most of which were quite far from the sea and usually far from any danger.[2]

Turning now to the more suspicious case of a story told in the late so-called *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux* which finishes in 1182 but is only found in an abridged version written in 1570 'avec un degré d'altération de la source difficile à percevoir'.[3] This fragment says that in 976 Hugh Capet sent Frotaire (*Froterius*) to Périgueux as its bishop,[4] and that he died on the 6th of the ides of November 991 and was buried at Saint-Front, after having occupied the episcopal seat for fourteen years, eight months and three days, during which time he had accomplished remarkable works. He had laid the foundation of the great monastery of Puy-Saint-Front, and built forts (*castra*) against the Northmen at Agonac, Crognac, Auberoche, Bassillac, and La Roque-Saint-Cristophe, before being assassinated by his provost (*prévô*t) at Mourcin in the parish of Coursac:

> Anno Incarnationis Dominicae noningentesimo septuagesimo sexto, Froterius Episcopus ab Hugone Capetio Francorum Rege Petragoras missus est, & rexit Ecclesiam annos XIV, menses VI, dies III. Obiit autem anno Domini DCCCCXCI. VI Idus Decembris & sepultus est in Basilica S. Frontonis. Hic Episcopus magnum Monasterium S. Frontonis aedificare coepit atque castrum Agoniacum, Craoniacum, Albam Rocham, rupem S. Christophori, rupem de Basiliaco, ut essent munimen & refugium contra Normannos tunc temporis paganis erroribus aberrantes; tempore hujus corpus S. Frontasii Martyris per visionem revelatum est cuidam viro religioso ejusdem Ecclesiae Canonico; locus tamen

[1] Emmanuel Barbier in his fine article on Maillezais does not question that the construction of this fortification was prompted by activities of Northmen in the region: see E. Barbier, 'Maillezais, du palais ducal au réduit bastionné', in C. Teffort and M. Tranchant (eds.), *L'Abbaye de Maillezais. Des moines de marais aux soldats huguenots* (Rennes, 2005), pp. 201-8.
[2] For which see S. Refalo, 'Les ducs d'Aquitaine et l'abbaye de Maillezais'.
[3] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30.
[4] M. Laharie, 'Évêques et société en Périgord du Xe au milieu du XIIe siècle', p. 345, n. 5, says this is impossible; Hugh 'Capet' only became king in 987.

> in quo jacebat propter guerrarum frequentes discursus penitus ignorabatur. Ad ultimum iste Episcopus a Praeposito suo jugulatus est in loco qui dicitur Morcinq, qui est in Parrochia de Coursiaco.[1]

All these forts are situated around, but at some distance from, Périgueux.[2] Their construction is sometimes placed in *c*.980, which is a complete guess, but more reasonably to between 980 and 990.[3] What is important is that here we have yet another example of later writers imputing the creation of small *castra* at this epoch in Aquitaine to a *peur des Normands*.

Frédéric Boutoulle says: 'Ces Normands peuvent être venus par la vallée de l'Isle, donc du Bordelais. Mais on sait aussi que ce type de justification, c'est-à-dire le besoin de se protéger contre les Normands par la construction de châteaux, est un *topos* fréquemment mis en avant afin de masquer d'autres motivations puisque le programme de Frotaire, érigé en parfait représentant de l'évêque *defensor civitatis*, s'inscrit dans une période de territorialisation et d'ancrage spatial des pouvoirs.'[4] More recently Yan Laborie has studied the case of Auberoch in great detail and concludes regarding all five *castra*:

> Le clerc de Saint-Front qui compose vers 1182 le *Fragment des évêques de Périgueux*, tout à l'avantage de la mémoire des prélats périgourdins, l'attribue à la crainte des Normands et au noble souci de l'évêque Frotaire de s'être préoccupé de pourvoir le diocèse de refuges publics. Rehaussant le prestige de l'évêque en le présentant dans la chronique comme celui qui, en des temps troublés, a assuré la défense du *pagus*, on ne peut exclure, a priori, que cette affirmation ne contienne pas un fond de vérité en prêtant une intention "civique" à l'action du prélat. Toutefois, en cette fin du Xe siècle, il paraît beaucoup plus crédible d'en chercher le fondement, non dans la crainte des Normands, mais plutôt, à ce moment, dans une probable instabilité de la situation locale, politique et sociale, résultant de l'affaiblissement de l'autorité publique, de la parcellisation de son

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[1] *Fragmentum de Petragoricensibus Episcopis; Sive Epitome gestorum quorundam Ecclesiae Petragoricensis Praesulum. Ex duobus Apographis calamo exaratis*, ed. P. Labbe, *Novae Bibliothecae Manuscriptorum Libororum*, vol. 2 (1657), pp. 737-40, at p. 737. For a French 'translation' see Abbé Riboulet, 'Fragmentum de episcopis petragoricensibus ex duobus apographis calamo exaratis', *Bulletin de la société historique et archéologique du Périgord*, vol. 4 (1877), pp. 158-61, at p. 158. See also J. Dupuy, *L'Estat de l'Eglise du Périgord depuis le christianisme* (Périgueux, 1629), pp. 218-9. Also useful is A. Massoni, 'La fondation du chapitre de Saint-Astier et les débuts de la collégiale'.

[2] For their precise locations see Y. Laborie, 'Auberoche: un *castrum* périgourdin contemporain de l'an Mil', in D. Barraud, F. Hautefeuille, and C. Rémy (eds.), *Archéologie du Midi médiéval, Supplément n° 4, Actes du colloque 'Résidences du pouvoir, pouvoir de la résidence: travaux archéologiques récents entre Loire et Pyrénées, Xe-XVe siècles, Recherches archéologiques récentes, 1987-2002', tenu à Pau les 3, 4 et 5 octobre 2002* (Carcassonne, 2006), pp. 167-93, fig. 2 at p. 172.

[3] See for example Y. Laborie, 'Auberoche : un *castrum* périgourdin contemporain de l'an Mil', pp. 168-69.

[4] F. Boutoulle, 'Par peur des Normands', p. 30.

exercice et de la contestation de celle-ci; processus qui affecta et modifia, semble-t-il, tout autant l'organisation sociale du Périgord au tournant de l'an Mil que celles de la Saintonge et de l'Angoumois voisins où André Debord nous en révèle toutes les étapes et les conséquences' - referring here to Debord's *La société laïque*.[1]

In my opinion this is probably correct and it reminds us of the story of the supposed construction of two *châteaux* by Vulgrin told of by Ademar of Chabannes which was discussed in Chapter 7. Indeed, I am of the opinion that the writer of the *Fragment of the bishops of Périgueux* most probably took Ademar's story as his model for this Périgordian story. This suggestion becomes almost a certainty when we consider that the only other story in the *Fragment* concerning the Northmen is about an invasion of Aquitaine and a battle involving William V 'the Great' of Poitiers/Aquitaine (the son of William Fier-à-Bras) which itself is quite obviously taken directly from Ademar. This was discussed more in Chapter 16. In conclusion regarding this Périgordian story, in my opinion there can be no question of any Northmen really threatening inland Périgord in the late tenth century.

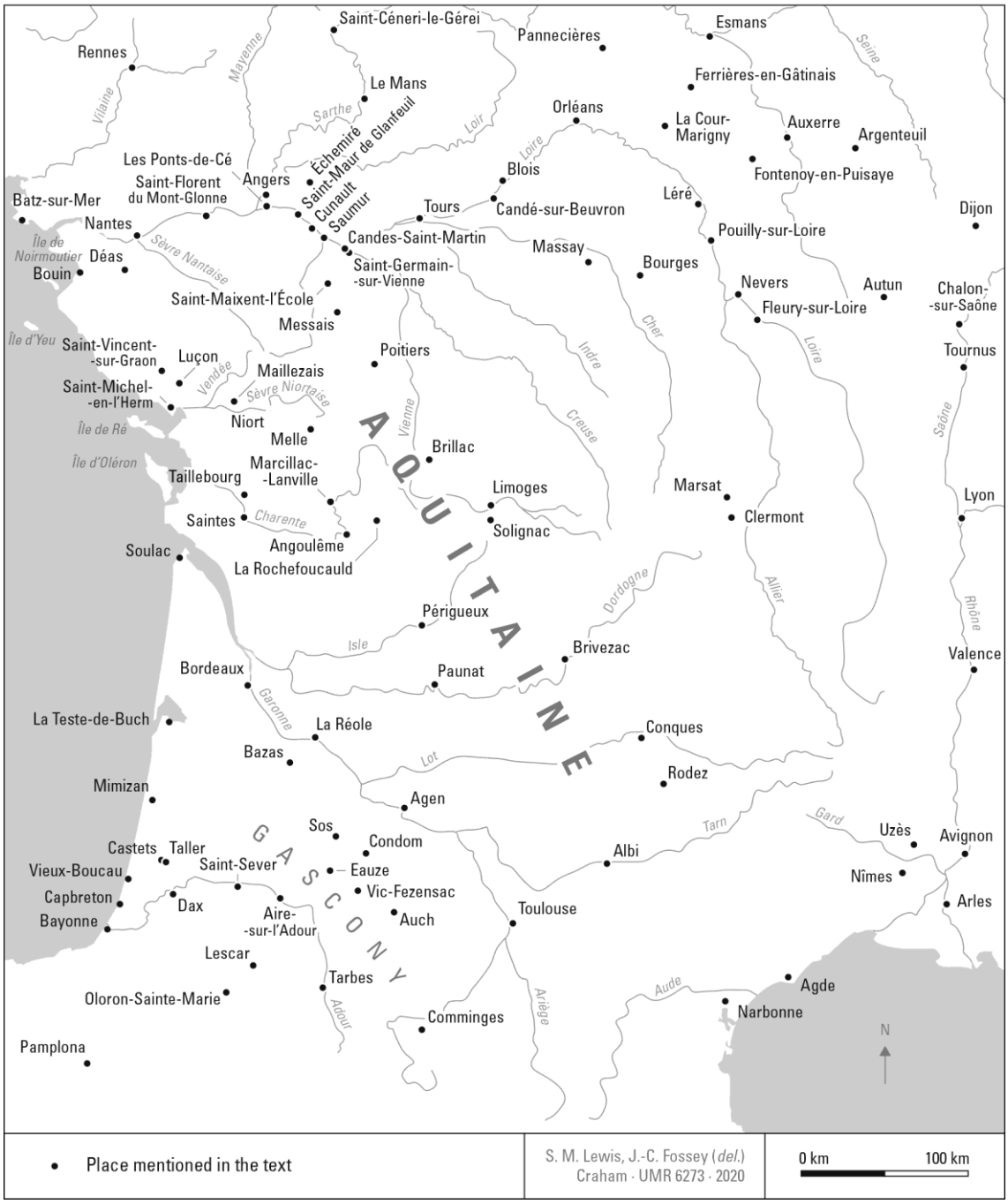
[1] Y. Laborie, 'Auberoche : un *castrum* périgourdin contemporain de l'an Mil', p. 169.

Maps

MAP 1 · GENERAL SITUATION IN WESTERN EUROPE

MAP 2 · THE FRANKISH REALM

MAP 3 · AQUITAINE



MAP 4 · BRITTANY

MAP 5 · NEUSTRIA, FRANCIA AND THE LOW COUNTRIES

MAP 6 · THE BRITISH ISLES

Résumé[1]

« Le fait que les sources dont dépendent tant de choses soient si ouvertes à l'interprétation et à la réinterprétation est ce qui rend l'étude de la période viking tellement fascinante. »[2]

Cette thèse est née de mon intérêt de longue date et de mes recherches sur l'histoire des vikings en Europe occidentale, qui a d'abord commencé avec le nord de l'Angleterre, l'Irlande et la Frise, mais s'est ensuite inévitablement étendue à la France et plus particulièrement à l'Aquitaine, au sud de la Loire, où j'ai vécu pendant de nombreuses années.[3]

L'histoire des vikings en Aquitaine s'étend, par intermittence, sur plus de deux siècles, depuis leur première apparition attestée et les attaques sur certaines « îles au large de l'Aquitaine » en 799 jusqu'au début du XIe siècle. C'est un sujet que les historiens n'ont abordé que sporadiquement et généralement de manière très fragmentaire et qui n'a jamais été approfondi.

Il m'est vite apparu que toutes les apparitions, razzias et opérations de ces Normands[4] devaient véritablement être placés dans des trajectoires ou itinéraires européens plus larges. Cela peut paraître évident, car les vikings se déplaçaient presque par définition continuellement « outre-mer », d'une région d'Europe occidentale à une autre. Mais étrangement, et à quelques exceptions près, ces liens et connexions restent méconnus. Ceci est particulièrement visible dans le cas de l'Aquitaine. En effet, au cours des dernières décennies, les bandes et flottes scandinaves opérant en Aquitaine à différents moments sur une période de deux siècles ont rarement été étudiées.

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[1] Je voudrais remercier Simon Lebouteiller et Pierre Bauduin pour avoir lu ce texte et m'avoir sauvé d'innombrables erreurs.

[2] N. Lund, « Allies of God or man? The Viking expansion in a European perspective », *Viator*, 20 (1989), p. 45-59, à la p. 59, notre traduction.

[3] Cf. S. M. Lewis, « Vikings on the Ribble: Their Origin and Longphuirt », *Northern History*, 53. 1 (2016), p. 8-25 ; *idem*, « Salt and the earliest Scandinavian raids in France: Was there a connection? », *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 12 (2016), p. 103-36 ; *idem*, « Rodulf and Ubba. In search of a Frisian-Danish Viking », *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 40 (2016), p. 5-42 ; *idem*, « Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark: An exploration of the case of Hálfdan, "king of the Danes" » (2017), disponible sur https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01943605 ; *idem*, « Death on the Seine: The mystery of the pagan king Setric », *Northern History*, 55. 1 (2018), p. 44-60 ; *idem*, « Aquitanian Viking Connections: The 840s and the Question of the Mullaghboden Silver Coins », *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 15 (2019), p. 151-202.

[4] J'utilise Normands ici pour signifier « Northmen » en anglais (*Normanni*/*Nortmanni* et similaires en latin) en général, comme le font des générations d'historiens français. Je préfère cela à « hommes du Nord ».

Objectifs

Les objectifs initiaux de cette étude étaient doubles. Le premier a été de tenter de combler les lacunes historiographiques béantes de notre compréhension des activités des différents groupes scandinaves opérant en Aquitaine, depuis la vallée de la Loire vers le sud, au cours de deux cents ans. Le but n'était pas seulement de rechercher et de présenter un résumé général, mais plutôt de fournir, dans la mesure du possible, une analyse et une interprétation approfondies des chefs et flottes impliqués, de leurs activités et des relations qu'ils entretenaient entre eux et, à divers moments, avec les rois et les magnats francs. En outre, nous avons voulu vérifier s'il existait des preuves réelles d'une implantation très durable, presque permanente, des Scandinaves en Aquitaine sur près de deux siècles, comme il a parfois été suggéré. Cela a impliqué l'identification, l'examen et l'évaluation de centaines de documents que nous pourrions qualifier de « sources primaires ». Celles-ci incluent toutes les annales, chroniques et histoires disponibles touchant à l'Aquitaine et plus généralement au royaume franc, mais aussi de nombreuses chartes, lettres, textes hagiographiques et même des données numismatiques, ainsi que quelques textes locaux tardifs et histoires dont la fiabilité était très variable.

Le deuxième objectif de cette étude est d'examiner les différentes connexions des Scandinaves impliqués et de les placer dans un contexte européen plus large. Il paraît évident que, comme ailleurs, tous les groupes et flottes de « vikings » actifs en Aquitaine ont été connectés. Ils se sont déplacés en permanence d'une région à une autre en Europe occidentale, lorsque les opportunités de pillage ont été restreintes par la défense locale, tandis que s'offraient ailleurs des horizons plus attrayants. Ces régions n'incluent pas seulement d'autres territoires de la France actuelle, mais aussi « outre-mer », à savoir la Grande-Bretagne, l'Irlande et la zone de la mer d'Irlande, la péninsule Ibérique et la Méditerranée, ainsi que la Frise et la Scandinavie elle-même.

Bien que ce soit vraiment un truisme, les études scientifiques menées sur les Normands en Aquitaine ont rarement fait ressortir ce point, sauf dans les rares cas où de telles connexions sont très explicites dans nos sources. Mais quand ces liens ne sont pas si évidents, une analyse approfondie de toutes les données et du contexte chronologique et politique du royaume franc (y compris la Bretagne), des îles Britanniques, de l'Irlande, de la péninsule Ibérique et des actuels Pays-Bas montre clairement que de telles connexions européennes existaient dans tous les cas. C'est ce que cette thèse explore et démontre pour le royaume franc. Bien sûr, dans certains cas, s'il est clair que les Normands concernés sont venus de quelque part en Aquitaine et sont partis ensuite ailleurs (à moins qu'ils ne soient morts), il y a souvent plus d'un scénario

possible que l'on pourrait proposer. Cette thèse examine tous ces cas et possibilités, préférant parfois l'un, mais à d'autres moments laissant ouverts plusieurs scenarios. De même tout au long de la thèse, et bien qu'elle repose très clairement sur des sources médiévales, les interprétations des générations précédentes d'historiens sont mises en évidence, explorées et critiquées, nous ramenant parfois plusieurs siècles en arrière. Par conséquent, à certains égards, notre thèse est également une étude historiographique des vikings en Aquitaine et, plus partiellement, ailleurs en Europe occidentale.

Méthodologie

La méthodologie employée dans cette thèse est essentiellement spatio-temporelle plutôt que thématique. L'approche adoptée commence et se fonde sur une exploration et une analyse détaillée de toutes les données que l'on peut trouver dans les sources concernant les Normands effectuant des razzias en Aquitaine et leurs relations et confrontations avec les rois francs et les élites locales. La fiabilité de ces sources varie considérablement, certaines comme les nombreuses annales, chroniques, actes et lettres étant raisonnablement fiables,[1] tandis que d'autres le sont beaucoup moins, telles que les *Vies* et *Translations* de nombreux saints ainsi que les chroniques ultérieures. Nous n'exclurons pas non plus des données numismatiques et archéologiques. Nous avons entrepris une critique des sources très serrée dans ce travail, et cela à plusieurs reprises tout au long de ce travail. Mais depuis l'Aquitaine, il faut déployer nos ailes géographiquement et tenter de retracer les connexions des Normands impliqués à des périodes précises. Cela nécessite d'examiner des événements probables ou possibles liés à d'autres ailleurs que dans le royaume franc (y compris en Bretagne), ainsi qu'en Angleterre, en Irlande, dans la péninsule Ibérique et en Frise. Dans de nombreux cas, nous pouvons établir ces connexions spatiales et temporelles sans beaucoup de difficulté ou de doute, et en s'appuyant sur l'onomastique, nous pouvons parfois même retracer les mouvements de chefs individuels et de leurs flottes et bandes de guerriers alors qu'ils se déplacent constamment en Europe occidentale. Mais dans de nombreux autres cas, nous ne pouvons que proposer des scénarios possibles et émettre des jugements et des interprétations raisonnés basés sur les preuves circonstancielles et contextuelles disponibles. Dans tous ces cas, cette thèse met en évidence les différents scénarios ou interprétations possibles à l'image de ceux que des générations d'historiens ont échafaudés à partir de ces questions.

[1] Nous discutons de la fiabilité ou non de toutes ces sources tout au long de la thèse.

Comme nous l'avons dit, l'approche adoptée ici est séquentielle ou chronologique. Nous pouvons citer ici Lewis Carroll dans son *Alice au pays des merveilles* : « Commencez par le début », dit le roi très gravement, « et continuez jusqu'à ce que vous arriviez à la fin : puis arrêtez ».[1] C'est ainsi que nous procédons dans cette thèse. À certains égards, il s'agit d'une approche plutôt démodée, mais elle apparaît nécessaire, car non seulement il reste de nombreux problèmes chronologiques délicats et à discuter, mais aussi parce que l'établissement de liens ou de connexions et le traçage de trajectoires à travers l'Europe occidentale sur plus de deux siècles nécessitent une compréhension approfondie des chronologies absolues et relatives. Nous ne pouvons entreprendre cela que si nous examinons les événements un à un et en détail, sur la base de sources fiables, sans sauter constamment les décennies, voire les siècles, en avant comme en arrière, parfois avec le bénéfice du recul.

Un peu d'historiographie

Depuis le milieu du XIXe siècle il existe une littérature historiographique volumineuse concernant les razzias et l'établissement des Normands en Europe occidentale, à partir de la première apparition de ces vikings à la fin du VIIIe siècle jusqu'à ce que nous pourrions peut-être appeler la dernière invasion et tentative de conquête de l'Angleterre par Harald le Sévère en 1066.

Avec des exceptions notables, l'une des carences d'une grande partie de cette historiographie des vikings en Europe occidentale, et en particulier aux IXe et Xe siècles, est que l'étude a encore tendance à être menée dans une perspective géographique qui favorise la nation et la région. Ainsi, nous trouvons de nombreuses belles études qui parlent de « Vikings en Angleterre », « Vikings en Irlande », « Vikings dans les Pays-Bas », « Vikings en France », « Vikings en Espagne », etc. Il existe également d'innombrables études sur différents pays qui explorent et fournissent des récits de périodes et de régions spécifiques en utilisant une grande partie des témoignages historiques contemporains ou quasi-contemporains disponibles, parfois associés à des découvertes archéologiques et des données numismatiques. Pourtant, dans la grande majorité des cas – encore une fois avec des exceptions – peu d'attention a été accordée aux relations de ces différents Normands : leurs liens internationaux et leurs mouvements.

Dans cette vaste historiographie, les groupes impliqués sont présentés trop souvent comme des *warbands* aléatoires qui se présentent dans une zone ou une région particulière, venues de régions obscures pour faire des razzias et mener quelques batailles, avant de disparaître enfin

[1] Cf. J. L. Nelson, *King and Emperor: A New Life of Charlemagne* (London, 2019), p. 7, notre traduction.

dans un éther inconnu et inconnaissable. Nous devons nous demander d'où venaient certains Normands et où ils sont allés par la suite. De quelle manière leurs apparitions et activités s'inscrivaient-elles dans des itinéraires ou trajectoires européens plus larges ?

Très souvent, les historiens ont souligné la nécessité d'étudier ces liens. À propos de l'Angleterre, par exemple, Simon Keynes déclare : « La question se pose toujours de savoir si un raid particulier enregistré dans la *Chronique anglo-saxonne* est mené par des hommes partis de Scandinavie, ou par des vikings établis sur le continent ou basés en Irlande; car il faut garder à l'esprit que les activités des vikings en Irlande, en Angleterre et sur le continent étaient des aspects complémentaires d'un même phénomène, et qu'un raid aurait pu faire partie d'un schéma plus large. » Keynes ajoute alors : « Il s'ensuit que nous ne pouvons pas commencer à comprendre le cours et la conduite des raids en Angleterre sans référence continue aux annales continentales et irlandaises, notamment les soi-disant Annales de St-Bertin, les Annales de St-Vaast, et les Annales d'Ulster. »[1] Selon Simon Coupland : « Les armées vikings changeaient continuellement dans leur composition, leur *leadership* et leur emplacement. De nouveaux éléments sont arrivés à mesure que d'anciens éléments quittaient, et le théâtre des opérations pouvait changer d'année en année. »[2] Lucien Musset a également écrit : « On entrevoit la nécessité de mener la recherche en confrontant sans cesse faits anglais et faits normands. »[3] Neil Price ajoute : « Parce que nous avons tendance à voir la période à travers le compte rendu écrit des victimes des vikings [...], il est facile d'oublier le fait que différents noms *d'armée* sont parfois des étiquettes alternatives pour la même force opérante à différents endroits ».[4] On pourrait ajouter bien d'autres observations pertinentes, même s'il faut dire qu'en général ces historiens et bien d'autres font rarement ce qu'ils proposent.

À quelques exceptions près, la plupart des histoires des « Vikings en France » se sont concentrées sur le royaume franc du nord (Neustrie et Francie), et parfois, naturellement, sur la Bretagne. Lorsque des connexions ou des itinéraires plus larges des Normands sont mentionnés, les générations antérieures d'historiens ont souvent tendance à prendre à la lettre de nombreuses histoires et sagas écrites tardivement en Islande et en Norvège, plus particulièrement celles concernant le légendaire Ragnar Lothbrok (*Ragnarr Loðbrók*) et sa litanie de fils supposés ou

[1] S. Keynes, « The Vikings in England, c. 790-1016 », dans P. H. Sawyer (éd.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), p. 48-82, à la p. 51, notre traduction.
[2] S. Coupland, « The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911 », dans R. McKitterick (éd.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 2: c.700 - c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 190-201, à la p. 195, notre traduction.
[3] L. Musset, « Pour l'étude comparative de deux fondations politiques des Vikings : le royaume d'York et le duché de Rouen », *Northern History*, 10. 1 (1975), p. 40-54, à la p. 53.
[4] N. S. Price, « Ship-Men and Slaughter-Wolves. Pirate Politics in the Viking Age », dans S. E. Amirel et L. Müller (éd.), *Persistent Piracy: Maritime Violence and State-Formation in Global Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2014), p. 51-68, à la p. 58, notre traduction.

inventés, de même que l'histoire racontée dans les soi-disantes *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland* concernant un chef appelé Ragnall (*Rögnvaldr*), qui est parfois identifié de manière erronée au Ragnar (*Reginheri*) historique qui a attaqué Paris en 845. De même, le voyage de deux des fils de Ragnall des Orcades vers la péninsule Ibérique via l'Angleterre et la France est souvent assimilé à tort à la deuxième expédition en Ibérie et en Méditerranée en 858-861.[1] Malgré sa perspicacité et sa profondeur, bien que partielles, la démystification par l'historien caennais Henri Prentout des histoires du début du XIe siècle de Dudon de Saint-Quentin dans son *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum* des activités du chef très composite Alsting (Hasting) et les prétendues activités précoces d'un jeune Rollon, le fondateur de la Normandie,[2] certains historiens ont tenté ces derniers temps de ressusciter ou de réhabiliter la crédibilité de Dudon, un effort que je juge très digne mais finalement infructueux comme nous le verrons à certaines occasions dans le présent travail. Mais bien qu'un débat de longue date sur l'origine de Rollon n'ait donné aucun consensus – venait-il de Norvège ou du Danemark ? –, et ce malgré l'opinion générale selon laquelle il avait passé quelque temps en Angleterre ou en Grande-Bretagne avant d'arriver dans la vallée de la Seine, les nombreux liens ou connexions réels entre les Normands opérant en Neustrie / Francie / Bretagne et en Aquitaine entre le Xe et le début XIe du siècle ont reçu peu d'attention particulière ; un certain nombre d'entre eux sont examinés en détail pour la première fois dans le présent travail.

En termes de ce que nous pourrions appeler « l'histoire et la chronologie des événements » à ce jour le meilleur ouvrage sur les activités des Normands dans le royaume des Francs occidentaux demeure le livre de Walther Vogel de 1906, *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich, bis zur Gründung der Normandie (799-911)*.[3] Pour la plupart des historiens germaniques et anglophones ultérieurs, et même pour certains historiens francophones, l'ouvrage tout à fait magistral de Vogel reste la référence de base et ses opinions sont très souvent citées, parfois sans critique, comme si c'était la fin de l'histoire. Mais comme nous le verrons à maintes reprises dans cette thèse, nous pouvons et devons nous opposer à Vogel concernant ses interprétations, en particulier quand, comme d'autres, il se focalise aveuglément et

[1] Cf. G.-B. Depping, *Histoire des expéditions maritimes des Normands et de leur établissement en France au dixième siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1826) ; J. Steenstrup, *Normannerne*, 2 vols (Copenhagen, 1876) ; *idem*, « Études préliminaires pour servir à l'histoire des Normands et de leurs invasions, avec une introduction de E. de Beaurepaire », *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de Normandie*, 10 (1882), p. 185-418 ; *idem*, *Les invasions normandes en France : Etude critique* (Paris, 1969) ; G. Storm, *Kritiske Bidrag til Vikingetidens Historie: (I. Ragnar Lodbrok og Gange-Rolf)* (Kristiania, 1878) ; H. Shetelig, *An Introduction to the Viking History of Western Europe*, *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 1 (Oslo, 1940) ; C. F. Keary, *The Vikings in Western Christendom, A D. 789 to A D. 888* (London, 1891).

[2] H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin et son histoire des premiers ducs normands* (Paris, 1916).

[3] W. Vogel, *Die Normannen und das fränkische Reich, bis zur Gründung der Normandie (799-911)* (Heidelberg, 1906).

excessivement sur les fils de Ragnar Lothbrok concernant les activités des Normands en Aquitaine et ailleurs. Pourtant, pour le IXe siècle et jusqu'en 911, date à laquelle son étude se termine, le livre de Vogel demeure un texte de lecture obligatoire pour tout examen de cette période en France. On ne peut tout simplement pas ignorer son travail si l'on veut commencer à comprendre l'histoire des Normands dans le royaume franc occidental.

L'autre grand érudit des Normands en France, mais encore une fois surtout concernant le IXe siècle, est l'historien français Ferdinand Lot.[1] Au tournant du XXe siècle, Lot étudiait et écrivait une histoire des incursions des Normands en France. Mais, comme le dit Lot lui-même, après avoir lu le travail de Walther Vogel, il décida d'abandonner cette tâche parce que Vogel avait très bien couvert le terrain.[2] C'est un aveu étonnant, quoiqu'admirable, d'un historien français concernant le travail d'un historien allemand sur les questions françaises. Néanmoins, Lot a continué à publier certaines parties de son étude dans des articles où il a contesté Vogel. En outre, bien après sa mort, certains de ses projets de chapitres sur ces incursions ont été publiés dans les trois volumes de son *Recueil des Travaux Historiques*, principalement dans le volume deux. Ces chapitres et nombre d'autres ouvrages pertinents et perspicaces de Lot sont fréquemment référencés, discutés et débattus dans cette thèse et peuvent être trouvés dans la bibliographie. Les vues de Lot fournissent cependant encore la base d'une part notable de l'historiographie française ultérieure sur les Scandinaves en France, à la fois sur la Seine, le long de la Loire et en Aquitaine.

Bien sûr, il y a eu beaucoup d'excellents travaux sur les vikings en France en général et sur le phénomène viking au cours du XXe siècle et au cours de ce siècle. Ils adoptent des approches qui sont bien différentes de Vogel et de Lot et donc participent à un renouvellement de l'historiographie des vikings. Je mentionnerais simplement ici ceux de Lucien Musset, Albert d'Haenens, Janet Nelson, Stéphane Lebecq, Simon Coupland, Pierre Bauduin, et, plus récemment, Christian Cooijmans.[3] Mais à l'exception de Coupland, la plupart de ces travaux se concentrent sur la France au nord de la Loire et en disent peu sur l'Aquitaine au sud du fleuve.

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[1] Cf. F. Lot, *Recueil des Travaux Historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, 3 vols (Genève et Paris, 1968-1973).

[2] F. Lot, « La Grande invasion normande de 856-862 », *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 69 (1908), p. 5-62, à la p. 5, n. 2. Il dit ici que le travail de Vogel a rendu la réalisation de son propre travail sur « les invasions scandinaves en France … inutile ».

[3] Par exemple L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)* (Paris, 1965) ; A. d'Haenens, *Les invasions Normandes en Belgique au IXe siècle. Le phénomène et sa répercussion dans l'historiographie médiévale* (Louvain, 1967) ; *idem*, « Les invasions normandes dans l'Empire franc au IXe siècle. Pour une rénovation de la problématique », *I Normanni e la loro espansione in Europa nell'altomedio evo, Settimane di Studio del Centra Italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo*, 16 (Spolète, 1969), p. 233-98 ; *idem*, *Les invasions normandes, une catastrophe ?* (Paris, 1970) ; J. L. Nelson, « The Frankish Empire », dans P. H. Sawyer (éd.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), p. 19-47 ; S. Lebecq, « Les Vikings en Frise : Chronique d'un échec relatif », dans P. Bauduin (éd.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident* (Caen, 2005), p.

Mais si les événements spatiaux et temporels et les connexions concernant les razzias et activités scandinaves dans le nord de la France et en Bretagne demandent encore un peu plus d'exploration que ce qui a été donné jusqu'à présent, la situation des incursions et activités des Normands en Aquitaine reste médiocre d'un point de vue historiographique. L'Aquitaine est définie ici, et très généralement, comme les terres situées au sud et à l'ouest de la Loire s'étendant jusqu'aux Pyrénées et englobant évidemment la Gascogne au sud de la Garonne. Cette vaste zone est un véritable trou noir dans la tradition historiographique des vikings.

L'histoire politique de l'Aquitaine aux IXe et Xe siècles a largement bénéficié des travaux de chercheurs tels que Léonce Auzias, Philippe Wolff, Archibald Lewis et Jane Martindale,[1] ainsi que beaucoup d'excellentes études sur des régions spécifiques d'Aquitaine. Mais toutes les préoccupations de ces historiens portent avant tout sur l'histoire politique de l'Aquitaine. Les activités des Normands sont généralement considérées comme importantes bien que périphériques. Tout comme l'affirmation de Ferdinand Lot, de nouveaux « groupes » de Normands non identifiés surgissent soudainement de temps en temps dans divers lieux d'Aquitaine « d'où nous ne savons pas ».[2] Ils se battent alors contre ou pour des rois ou des nobles francs avant de disparaître à nouveau dans un éther maritime inconnu ou inconnaissable.

97-112 ; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald* ; *idem*, « The rod of God's wrath or the people of God's wrath? The Carolingians' theology of the Viking invasions », *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 42 (1991), p. 535-54 ; *idem*, « The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald », *Journal of Medieval History*, 17. 1 (1991), p. 1-12 ; *idem*, « The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911 », dans R. McKitterick (éd.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History Volume. 2: c.700–c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 190-201 ; *idem*, « The Frankish tribute payments to the Vikings and their consequences », *Francia*, 26. 1 (1999), p. 57-75 ; *idem*, « The Vikings on the Continent in myth and history », *History*, 88 (2003), p. 187-203 ; *idem*, « The Carolingian army and the struggle against the Vikings », *Viator*, 35 (2004), p. 49-70 ; *idem*, « Raiders, traders, worshippers and settlers: the Continental perspective », dans J. Graham-Campbell, S. M. Sindbæk, et G. Williams (éd.), *Silver Economies, Monetisation and Society in Scandinavia, AD 800-1100* (Aarhus, 2011), p. 113-31 ; *idem*, « Holy Ground? The Plundering and Burning of Churches by Vikings and Franks in the Ninth Century », *Viator*, 45. 1 (2014), p. 73-97 ; P. Bauduin, *Le monde franc* ; *idem*, *Histoire des vikings* ; C. Cooijmans, *Monarchs and Hydrarchs: The Conceptual Development of Viking Activity Across the Frankish Realm (c. 750–940)* (Londres et New York, 2020).

[1] Cf. L. Auzias, « Recherches d'histoire carolingienne. I. Les fluctuations politiques de quelques grands d'Aquitaine au temps de Charles le Chauve (846-874) », *Annales du Midi*, 44. 176 (1932), p. 385-416 ; *idem*, *L'Aquitaine carolingienne (778 - 987)* (Toulouse et Paris, 1937) ; P. Wolff, « L'Aquitaine et ses marges », dans H. Beumann (éd.), *Karl der Große: Lebenswerk und Nachleben I. Persönlichkeit und Geschichte* (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 269-306 ; A. R. Lewis, *The development of southern French and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (Austin, TX, 1965) ; J. Martindale, « The Kingdom of Aquitaine and the "Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc" », *Francia*, 11 (1984), p. 131-91 ; *eadem*, « Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine », dans M. T. Gibson et J. L. Nelson (éd.), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* (Aldershot, 1990), p. 115-38 ; *eadem*, « Peace and war in eleventh-century Aquitaine », dans C. Harper-Bill et R. Harvey (éd.), *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood IV: Papers from the fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990* (Woodbridge, 1992), p. 147-76 ; *eadem*, *Status, Authority and Regional Power: Aquitaine and France, 9th to 12th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1997).

[2] Par exemple F. Lot, « La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine de 862 à 866. Robert le Fort », *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 76 (1915), p. 473-510, à la p. 482, n. 2.

A propos des Normands en Poitou dans le nord de l'Aquitaine, Marcel Garaud a écrit un article en 1937 intitulé « Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences ».[1] Dans cet article Garaud fournit une introduction facilement accessible aux néophytes, mais peu novatrice car il est principalement basé sur les idées d'historiens antérieurs tels qu'Alfred Richard et Ferdinand Lot. Nous avons aussi les travaux très intéressants d'Émile Mabille, corrigés par Pierre Gasnault, qui examinent les activités des Normands le long de la Loire au IXe siècle jusqu'à l'attaque de Tours en 903.[2] Le linguiste caennais Jean Renaud a également écrit des courts ouvrages populaires sur les « vikings » en Aquitaine qui n'apportent pas vraiment d'idées originales.[3] Pour ce qui est de la Gascogne, au cours des dernières décennies, le seul ouvrage savant qui prétend fournir un récit complet est *Les princes de Gascogne* de Renée Mussot-Goulard en 1982, couplé à certaines de ses études ultérieures.[4] Ce livre reste cependant un ouvrage très imparfait pour ce qui concerne les Normands et il est analysé et critiqué en détail dans les chapitres 8 et 15. L'historien bordelais Frédéric Boutoulle a également produit un article sur les « Vikings à Bordeaux ».[5]

Mais aucun des travaux mentionnés ci-dessus, même combinés et couplés aux travaux de Vogel et du Lot, n'offre quelque chose se rapprochant d'une analyse complète des activités scandinaves en Aquitaine sur deux siècles et encore moins de leurs nombreuses connexions avec le reste de l'Europe occidentale. C'est bien entendu cette lacune que la présente thèse tente au moins partiellement de combler.

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[1] M. Garaud, « Les invasions des normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences », *Revue Historique,* 180 (1937), p. 241-67. Voir aussi M. Garaud, « Les origines des « pagi » poitevins du Moyen Âge (VI e -XI e siècles) », *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4. 27 (1949), p. 543-61. Bien qu'elle ne porte pas du tout sur les Normands, l'*Histoire des comtes de Poitou (778-1204*) d'Alfred Richard (Paris, 1903) est toujours la plus perspicace, tandis que celle d'André Debord, *La société laïque dans les pays de la Charente Xe-XIIe siècles* (Paris, 1984), n'apporte pas grand-chose à nos préoccupations ici, et il se trompe souvent quand il s'agit des « vikings ».

[2] É. Mabille, « Les invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de saint Martin [premier article] » et « Les invasions normandes dans la Loire et les pérégrinations du corps de saint Martin [second article] », *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 30 (1869), p. 149-94 et p. 425-60 ; P. Gasnault, « Le tombeau de saint Martin et les invasions normandes dans l'histoire et dans la légende », *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France*, 47. 144 (1961), p. 51-66.

[3] Voir par exemple J. Renaud, *Les Vikings de la Charente à l'assaut de l'Aquitaine* (Pau, 2003) ; *idem*, *Les îles de Vendée face aux Vikings* (Verrières, 2008).

[4] Cf. R. Mussot-Goulard, « Mémoire, tradition, histoire, en Gascogne au début du Xle siècle », dans *Actes des congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, 13e congrès*, *Aix-en-Provence* (1982), p. 141-56 ; *eadem*, « La bataille de Taller », dans *Colloque sur le Millénaire de la Bataille de Taller*, *Bulletin de la Société de Borda*, 108 (Dax, 1983), p. 541-61 ; *eadem*, *Histoire de Condom. 1, Des origines à 1317* (Marsolan, Lectoure, 1988) ; *eadem*, « Saint-Léon, Bayonne et la Gascogne à la fin du IXe siècle », dans R. Mussot-Goulard et P. Hourmat (éd.), *Saint-Léon de Bayonne*, *Publication de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne* (Bayonne, 1994), p. 34-35.

[5] F. Boutoulle, « Par peur des Normands. Les Vikings à Bordeaux et la mémoire de leurs incursions. État des sources », *Revue archéologique de Bordeaux*, 99 (2008), p. 23-38.

D'autres façons de regarder les connexions

Depuis l'époque de Lot et Vogel, au cours des dernières décennies, le concept de ce que je suggère que nous pourrions appeler les « connexions viking » a été développé par des historiens tels que, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns, Lucien Musset, Peter Sawyer, Alfred Smyth et Simon Coupland,[1] bien qu'à l'exception de Coupland, les connexions aquitaines sont rarement présentes. En outre, le concept relativement récent d'une *diaspora viking* introduit par Judith Jesch et développé par des historiens tels que Lesley Abrams, Pierre Bauduin et Alban Gautier s'est avéré être une contribution des plus intéressantes à toute compréhension des liens européens des Normands, en particulier au Xe siècle.[2] Ce nouveau volet de l'historiographie n'est pas sans rapport avec l'analyse des connexions présentée dans cette thèse.

En ce qui concerne les connexions à travers la mer du Nord à l'époque des vikings, nous avons également de nombreuses études récentes de Stéphane Lebecq, Alban Gautier et Lucie Malbos qui ont rassemblé des données **a**rchéologiques et historiques concernant les ports des mers du Nord à l'époque viking.[3]

Ces dernières années, certains historiens et même des mathématiciens ont tenté d'utiliser *complex network analysis* sur des données archéologiques et historiques pour éclairer les liens,

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[1] Voir par exemple L. Musset, *Les invasions : le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe-XIe siècle)* (Paris, 1965) ; P. H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, 1er édn (London, 1962) ; *idem*, *Kings and Vikings. Scandinavia and Europe AD 700-1100* (Londres et New York, 1982) ; A. P. Smyth, *Scandinavian Kings in the British Isles 850-880* (Oxford, 1977) ; *idem*, *Scandinavian York and Dublin. The History and Archaeology of Two Related Viking Kingdoms* (Dublin 1987) ; S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald and the defence of the West Frankish Kingdom against the Viking invasions, 840-877*, Ph.D (University of Cambridge, 1987) ; *idem*, « The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911 », dans R. McKitterick (éd.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History Volume. 2: c.700–c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 190-201.

[2] Cf. J. Jesch, « Myth and Cultural Memory in the Viking Diaspora », *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 4 (2008), p. 221-26; *eadem*, *The Viking Diaspora* (London, 2015) ; L. J. Abrams, « Diaspora and identity in the Viking Age », *Early Medieval Europe*, 20. 1 (2012), p. 17-38 ; P. Bauduin, *Histoire des vikings*, p. 294-301 ; *idem*, « Lectures (dé)coloniales des vikings », *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 59. 1 (2016), p. 1-18 ; A. Gautier, « Le phénomène viking » et « La diaspora viking', dans B. Dumézil, S. Joye, et C. Mériaux (éd.), *Confrontation, échanges et connaissance de l'autre au nord et à l'est de l'Europe, de la fin du VIIe siècle au milieu du XIe siècle* (Rennes, 2017), p. 99-115 et p. 347-64.

[3] Par exemple S. Lebecq, *Hommes, mers et terres du Nord au début du Moyen Âge*, 2 vols (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2011); S. Lebecq et A. Gautier, « Routeways between England and the Continent in the Tenth Century », dans D. Rollason, C. Leyser, et H. Williams (éd.), *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947)* (Turnhout, 2010), p. 17-34 ; A. Gautier, « La piraterie dans les mers du Nord au haut Moyen Âge », dans G. Buti et P. Hrodej (éd.), *Histoire des corsaires et des pirates, de l'Antiquité à nos jours* (Paris, 2016), p. 77-90 ; *idem*, « Nature et mode d'action des bandes armées vikings : quelques réflexions sur la seconde moitié du IXe siècle », *Revue d'histoire nordique*, 23 (2018), p. 71-86 ; *idem*, « Armed bands on both sides of the Channel (865-899): can we track individual Viking gangs? », dans M. J. Barroca et A. C. Ferreira da Silva (éd.), *Mil Anos da Incursão Normanda ao Castelo de Vermoim* (Porto, 2018), pp. 27-38 ; L. Malbos, *Les ports des mers nordiques à l'époque viking (VIIe - Xe siècles)* (Turnhout, 2017) ; A. Gautier et L. Malbos (éd.), *Communautés maritimes et insulaires du premier Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2020). Voir aussi les articles dans S. Gelichi and R. Hodges, *From One Sea to Another. Trading Places in the European and Mediterranean Early Middle Ages*, *Proceedings of the International Conference, Comacchio, 27th-29th March 2009* (Turnhout, 2012).

en particulier en termes d'échanges et de commerce. On pourrait citer ici le cas Søren Sindbæk qui utilise la *Vita Anskarii* de Rimbert, et, en élaborant un modèle mathématique plus poussé, de Joseph Yose *et al* qui examinent le *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib* (« La guerre des Irlandais avec les étrangers ») composé au début du XIIe siècle.[1] Ce type de travail est une nouvelle approche fascinante, bien que de tels modèles soient généralement basés sur un seul texte, alors que dans cette thèse nous sommes confrontés à un ensemble de textes différents.

Une autre façon de considérer les connexions est l'archéologie. L'archéologie peut décrire des réalités autres que celles connues par des textes, ou des éléments qui n'apparaissent pas dans les sources écrites. Lorsqu'elle est réunie avec des données historiques provenant de sources originales fiables, nous pouvons obtenir une image beaucoup plus complète. Histoire, archéologie et numismatique doivent aller de pair, même si cela peut entraîner des raisonnements circulaires. Prenons par exemple les divers camps d'hiver ou bases de navires scandinaves qui ont été découverts et même fouillés dans des endroits comme l'Irlande et l'Angleterre, et même les nombreux trésors qui ont fourni tant de pièces de monnaie ainsi que d'autres découvertes. Celles-ci ont été des plus éclairantes et ont considérablement aidé notre compréhension de « l'âge des vikings ». En Angleterre, au neuvième siècle, nous avons les camps de Repton et de Torksey qui peuvent clairement être liés à des événements impliquant la « grande armée païenne » au début des années 870, comme le raconte la Chronique anglo-saxonne.[2] De même, le camp trouvé à Woodstown près de l'actuel Waterford en Irlande nous a aidés à confirmer et à élargir les données textuelles de diverses annales irlandaises et à fournir de nombreuses autres données utiles qui ne se trouvent dans aucune annale.[3] Dans l'actuelle France, il y a une sépulture à bateau « viking » découverte sur l'île de Groix (dép. Morbihan)

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[1] S. M. Sindbæk, « The Small World of the Vikings: Networks in Early Medieval Communication and Exchange », *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 40. 1 (2007), p. 59-74 ; J. Yose, R. Kenna, M. MacCarron, et P. MacCarron, « Network analysis of the Viking Age in Ireland as portrayed in *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh* », *Royal Society Open Science* (2018), disponible sur royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsos.171024.

[2] Cf. M. Biddle et B. Kjølbye-Biddle, « Repton and the "great heathen army", 873-4 », dans J. Graham-Campbell, R. Hall, J. Jesch, et D. N. Parsons (éd.), *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress* (Oxford, 2001), p. 45-96 ; D. Hadley et J. D. Richards, « Viking Torksey: Inside the Great Army's winter camp », *Current Archaeology*, 281 (2013) ; *eadem*, « The Winter Camp of the Viking Great Army, AD 872-3, Torksey », *Antiquaries Journal*, 96 (2016), p. 23-67 ; *eadem*, « In search of the Viking Great Army », *Medieval Settlement Research*, 33 (2018), p. 1-17 ; J. D. Richards et D. Haldenby, « The Scale and Impact of Viking Settlement in Northumbria », *Medieval Archaeology*, 62 (2018), p. 322-50 .

[3] Cf. I. Russell et M. F. Hurley (éd.), *Woodstown: a Viking-age settlement in co. Waterford* (Dublin, 2014) ; E. Kelly, « The *longphort* in Viking-Age Ireland: the archaeological evidence », dans H. B. Clarke et R. Johnson (éd.), *The Vikings in Ireland and Beyond: before and after the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2015), p. 55-92 ; E. Kelly et J. Maas, « Vikings on the Barrow », *Archaeology Ireland*, 9 (1995), p. 30-32 ; *idem*, « The Vikings and the kingdom of Laois », dans P. G. Lane et W. Nolan (éd.), *Laois History & Society, Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County* (1999), p. 123-59.

au large de la côte sud de la Bretagne.[1] Bien que cela n'ait pas été fouillé à l'origine de manière satisfaisante selon des normes scientifiques, on pense à partir de la datation comparative des types d'épées et des éléments stylistiques qu'elle pourrait dater de la seconde moitié du dixième siècle. Si cette chronologie est avérée, cela pose la question d'une présence viking non attestée dans ce secteur dans les textes existants. Nous approcherons cette question dans ce travail. En Aquitaine proprement dite, du sud de la Loire, il y a quelques épées trouvées dans la Loire et près de Bordeaux[2] et d'autres découvertes « viking » sur la Charente.[3] Dans le cas des découvertes charentaises, nous connaissons une présence scandinave dans la région au milieu du IXe siècle à partir de textes contemporains ou quasi contemporains, mais vingt-cinq des objets trouvés sont généralement reconnus comme étant d'un de type « anglo-scandinave » avérés, ou probables, qui amène les archéologues concernés à déclarer: « Cette concentration est la plus forte à ce jour en France […]. Elle laisse penser que le port de Taillebourg a pu entretenir des relations avec l'axe transmanche, formant ainsi une passerelle entre le val de la Charente et le monde insulaire. »[4] Ces liens « transmanche » entre l'Aquitaine (y compris la

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[1] Cf. L. Tarrou, *Corpus du mobilier de type scandinave (IXe-XIe siècles) découvert en France : Bretagne, Normandie et Pays de la Loire*, mémoire de master 2 (Université de Poitiers, 2000) ; *eadem*, « La sépulture à bateau viking de l'île de Groix (Morbihan) », *Les Vikings en France*, *Dossiers d'Archéologie*, 277 (2000), p. 72-79 ; *eadem*, « La sépulture à bateau de l'île de Groix (Morbihan) », dans É. Ridel (éd.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc* (Bayeux, 2014), p. 40-41 ; M. Müller-Wille, « Das Schiffsgrab von der Ile de Groix (Bretagne). Ein Exkurs zum "Bootkammergrab von Haithabu" », *Ausgrabungen in Haithabu (1963–1980): Das archäologische Fundmaterial der Ausgrabung Haithabu*, Band 3, Bericht 12 (Neumünster, 1978), p. 48-84.

[2] Cf. I. Cartron, *Les pérégrinations de Saint-Philibert. Genèse d'un réseau monastique dans la société carolingienne* (Rennes, 2009) ; G. Durville, « Les épées normandes de l'île de Bièce », *Bulletin de la société Archéologique et Historique de Nantes et de la Loire-Inférieure*, 68 (1928), p. 121-46 ; H. Arbman et N.-O. Nilsson, « Armes scandinaves de l'époque viking en France », dans *Meddelanden Från Lunds Universitets Historika Museum 1966-68* (Lund, 1969), p. 163-202, à la p. 168-69 ; M. Müller-Wille, « Das Schiffsgrab von der Ile de Groix (Bretagne) », p. 70-79 ; J. Renou, « L'épée du fond du fleuve : relecture archéologique d'un artefact dit « viking » conservé au Musée d'Aquitaine de Bordeaux », *Revue archéologique de Bordeaux*, 177, (2016), p. 39-45 ; *eadem*, Résumé de mémoire : « De l'objet de patrimoine à l'objet archéologique: étude des artefacts « vikings » conservés au musée d'Aquitaine de Bordeaux », *Aquitania*, 30 (2014), p. 379-83.

[3] Cf. A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, et M. Pichon, « La Charente à Taillebourg-Port d'Envaux (France, dép. Char.-Mar.). Premiers résultats d'une prospection thématique subaquatique », *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt,* 33 (2003), p. 585-96 ; A. Dumont et J.-F. Mariotti, *Archéologie et histoire du fleuve Charente : Taillebourg-Port d'Envaux : une zone portuaire du haut Moyen Age sur le fleuve Charente* (Dijon, 2013) ; A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, et J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente ? Le témoignage de l'archéologie », dans É. Ridel (éd.), *Les Vikings dans l'empire franc* (Bayeux, 2014), p. 42-49 ; J. Chapelot, « Le pont et la chaussée de Taillebourg (Charente-Maritime) : l'histoire complexe d'un grand aménagement médiéval », dans *Actes du colloque la rivière aménagée : entre héritages et modernité : formes, techniques et mise en œuvre*, *Aestuaria*, 7 (Orleans, 2005), p. 151-205 ; *idem*, « Aux origines des châteaux et des bourgs castraux dans la moyenne et basse Charente », dans A.-M. Flambard-Héricher et J. Le Maho (éd.), *Château, ville et pouvoir au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout, 2012), p. 81-156 ; J. Clémens, « Taillebourg, des refuges normands en Aquitaine au IXe siècle », dans *Les Landes entre tradition et écologie*, *Actes du XLVIIe Congrès d'études régionales de la Fédération historique du Sud-Ouest tenu à Sabres les 25-26 mars 1995* (Bordeaux, 1996), p. 337-54.

[4] A. Dumont, J.-F. Mariotti, et J. Soulat, 'Taillebourg, une base viking sur la Charente ? Le témoignage de l'archéologie », p. 47.

vallée de la Charente) et les îles Britanniques, y compris l'Irlande, sont abordés dans plusieurs chapitres.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, il y a l'étude des noms de lieux et des micro-toponymes censés être d'origine scandinave. Beaucoup de travail a été fait sur ces derniers en particulier en Normandie et en Angleterre.[1] Mais l'une des difficultés persistantes de ces études est que même lorsque nous pouvons être sûrs qu'elles sont scandinaves et pas seulement « germaniques », on ne peut généralement pas établir avec certitude lorsque ces noms ont été formés pour la première fois ; était-ce au neuvième ou au dixième siècle, ou était-ce même beaucoup plus tard ? Ensuite, il y a la numismatique. L'étude des pièces de monnaie trouvées dans les trésors « vikings » et ailleurs peut parfois être très éclairante en termes de connexions, et dans la présente étude nous examinons quelques exemples fascinants. L'un porte sur la relation possible entre l'Irlande et les Normands opérant en Aquitaine dans les années 840, et l'autre sur la provenance aquitaine de nombreuses pièces carolingiennes trouvées dans le célèbre trésor de Cuerdale découvert sur la rivière Ribble dans le comté de Lancashire dans le nord-ouest de l'Angleterre.

L'étendue de la matière

Comme cela a été mentionné, cette thèse se déroule généralement par ordre chronologique, avec toutefois quelques chevauchements. Les points développés dans les différents chapitres peuvent être ici brièvement énumérés sous la forme d'un synopsis :

Chapitre 1. Ce chapitre d'introduction présente les objectifs de la thèse, un peu d'historiographie, la méthodologie employée et l'étendue de la matière.

Chapitre 2. Le premier raid scandinave dans le royaume franc dont nous avons connaissance n'a pas eu lieu dans les régions septentrionales mais sur certaines « îles au large de l'Aquitaine ». Au cours des plus de trente années qui suivirent, les Normands revinrent à plusieurs reprises dans la baie de Bourgneuf et sur l'île de Noirmoutier à l'embouchure de la Loire. L'une des raisons de leur concentration sur ce domaine était très probablement l'existence d'une exploitation florissante du sel de la région. Certains de ces premiers raids en Aquitaine peuvent provenir d'Irlande, mais il est très clair qu'au moins un (et probablement plusieurs) d'entre eux ont été entrepris par des hommes venus directement de Scandinavie ou de Frise.

[1] Cf. par exemple les articles d'Anne Nissen-Jaubert, Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Åse Kari H. Wagner et Élisabeth Ridel dans P. Bauduin (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident et les débuts du duché de Normandie*, *Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (25-29 septembre 2002)* (Caen, 2005) et L. J. Abrams, « Early Normandy », *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 35, *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2012* (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 45-64.

Chapitre 3. Depuis le début des années 840, toute la teneur et l'ampleur des incursions ont changé. Venue de la mer du Nord (donc de Scandinavie ou de Frise), une importante flotte, dirigée semble-t-il par un chef appelé Oskar, a effectué un raid sur la Seine en 841 et fut probablement responsable de raids dans le sud de l'Angleterre et dans l'*emporium* florissant de Quentovic en 842, après quoi il fit le tour de la péninsule bretonne et arriva sur la Loire en 843 où il attaqua et saccagea la ville de Nantes et tua son évêque. C'est cette flotte qui, au cours des années suivantes, entreprend de nombreuses attaques en Aquitaine, atteignant même Toulouse en 844 où une troupe se détacha et mena une expédition vers la péninsule Ibérique. Par la suite, la même flotte, ou une partie de celle-ci, continua ses raids en Aquitaine jusqu'au printemps 849, y compris le siège de Bordeaux pendant l'hiver de 847 puis la capture de la ville au début de 848. Quelque temps après une attaque sur Périgueux au printemps 849, ces Normands, toujours sous Oskar semble-t-il, retournèrent sur la Seine pendant un certain temps avant de regagner leur terrain de prédilection en 852. Dans ce chapitre, l'idée souvent exprimée que ces Normands étaient venus d'Irlande et y étaient retournés par la suite est examinée. La conclusion est que cette connexion irlandaise n'est probablement pas valide. Néanmoins, d'autres liens avec le Danemark ou la Frise, la Seine, probablement l'Angleterre et la péninsule Ibérique, sont plus évidents.

Chapitre 4. La même flotte qui opérait en Aquitaine dans les années 840 sous Oskar retourna en Aquitaine en 852. Ses activités là-bas et le long de la Loire pendant les années suivantes peuvent être retracées avec une certaine précision. Mais pendant ce temps, une autre flotte scandinave arriva sur la basse Loire à Nantes (en 853), conduite par Sidroc (*Sigtryggr*), un chef qui avait déjà été actif sur la Seine. Avec l'aide des Bretons, il assiégea Oskar dans son camp sur l'île de *Betia* près de Nantes. Lors de cette rencontre, Sidroc fut blessé mais il conclut un accord avec les Normands sur *Betia* et repartit ensuite vers le nord.[1] Cependant, la flotte d'Oskar – peut-être même dans une nouvelle direction, mais ce n'est pas du tout clair – a continué ses raids en Aquitaine jusqu'en 857 quand, en collaboration avec le neveu de Charles le Chauve, Pépin II d'Aquitaine, elle a attaqué Poitiers. Ce sont probablement aussi ces mêmes Normands qui entreprirent la deuxième expédition scandinave vers la péninsule Ibérique et la Méditerranée au cours de la période allant de 858 à 861. Ici, nous voyons à nouveau de nombreuses liaisons entre les Normands actifs en Aquitaine et sur la Seine et dans la péninsule Ibérique.

[1] Il est fort possible que Sidroc ait été l'un des « pirates » de retour à l'étranger qui se sont disputés le pouvoir au Danemark en 854.

Chapitre 5. Avant de se tourner vers la Loire et l'Aquitaine dans la première moitié des années 860, qui semblent certainement avoir été l'apogée des activités scandinaves dans le sud-ouest de la France, ce chapitre revient sur les événements dans les régions de la Seine et de la Somme et en Angleterre entre 856 et 862. Ce sont quelques-uns de ces Normands, et en particulier un chef du nom de Weland, qui, avec certains des Scandinaves revenus de la péninsule Ibérique à la fin de 861 ou au début de 862, sont responsables de toutes les incursions le long de la Loire et en Aquitaine au cours des années suivantes. La carrière du chef Weland n'a jusqu'à présent jamais été approfondie.

Chapitre 6. Ce chapitre examine ce que les Normands venus de la Seine en 862 et ceux qui étaient revenus de « l'Espagne » ont fait sur la Loire et en Aquitaine au cours des années suivantes. Cela comprend non seulement leur attaque sur Poitiers à la fin de 863 mais aussi le long raid jusqu'à Clermont et le siège de Toulouse en compagnie de Pépin II d'Aquitaine, tous deux au début de 864. On mentionne également le chef *Maurus* en 863 et son successeur apparent Sigfrid qui a probablement attaqué Clermont. Après ce raid sur Clermont, Sigfrid était de retour dans sa base sur la Charente à la fin de 864 ou 865 et son dernier combat dans la région est également exploré.

Chapitre 7. Après 865, quelques historiens prétendent parfois que les Normands (sous Sigfrid peut-être ?) poursuivirent leurs activités en Aquitaine pendant les années suivantes. Ce chapitre explore cette question, en particulier les deux prétendues « preuves » généralement avancées pour soutenir l'idée d'une présence continue, notamment le cas de l'archevêque Frotaire de Bordeaux et quelques récits du chroniqueur Adémar de Chabannes, qui écrivait au début du XIe siècle. La conclusion est qu'il est peu probable que les Normands aient continué leurs raids en Aquitaine bien après 865.

Chapitre 8. Ce chapitre examine en détail les idées de l'historienne de la Sorbonne et de Pau Renée Mussot-Goulard dans son ouvrage de 1982 *Les princes de Gascogne*, lui-même basé sur les vues de plusieurs historiens antérieurs, selon laquelle il y avait une présence scandinave continue en Gascogne au sud de la Garonne de 840 jusqu'à la fin du IXe siècle, et même au-delà. En examinant toutes les preuves prétendues de cette idée, nous concluons que, bien qu'il y ait certainement eu des raids scandinaves au sud de la Garonne, en Gascogne, au IXe siècle, l'idée d'une présence continue et sur une longue durée est probablement erronée.

Chapitre 9. Ce chapitre examine les activités scandinaves le long de la Loire, en Neustrie et en Bretagne de 864 jusqu'au siège d'Angers en 873. Certains des Normands impliqués étaient ceux qui étaient revenus de leurs raids plus au sud, tandis que d'autres venaient d'ailleurs. Parmi ceux-ci figurait un chef appelé Baret qui lança la première attaque contre le monastère

bénédictin de Fleury, sur la Loire, en 865, mais qui était probablement arrivé sur la Loire l'année précédente, peut-être d'Irlande. Il y a aussi le personnage historique Alsting / Hasting qui aurait bien pu arriver sur la Loire à cette époque, peut-être depuis la Seine bien que ce ne soit pas sûr. Mais il est fort probable qu'Alsting / Hasting ait été le chef des Normands qui ont finalement été assiégés par Charles le Chauve à Angers en 873. Donc, encore une fois, si nous incluons la vallée de la Loire dans notre définition de l'Aquitaine (ce que nous faisons), nous pouvons aussi voire ici de nombreuses connexions avec la Seine, la Bretagne et l'Irlande.

Chapitre 10. Ce chapitre examine les événements après le siège d'Angers en 873 jusqu'à ce qu'Alsting / Hasting se soit finalement retiré de la région en 882, et avant qu'il ne réapparaisse sur la Somme en 890. Il semble qu'Alsting / Hasting ait passé les années intermédiaires en Bretagne, puis de nouveau sur la Loire, où il a rejoint pour le duc breton Pascweten qu'il a servi comme mercenaire. Nous examinons également la deuxième attaque contre le monastère de Fleury, le rôle de Hugues l'Abbé et ce qui a conduit Alsting / Hasting à quitter la Loire en 882.

Chapitre 11. Après qu'Alsting / Hasting (*Hæsten* dans les sources anglo-saxonnes) eut quitté le nord de la Francia en 892, il fit des raids en Angleterre au cours des quatre années suivantes. Ce qu'il est advenu de lui après cela n'est pas du tout clair. Mais en 896, certains Normands d'Angleterre arrivèrent en France, d'abord sous le commandement d'un chef appelé *Huncdeus*. Mais ils furent bientôt renforcés ou simplement complétés par de nombreux autres Normands venus soit d'Angleterre, soit d'ailleurs. Ces Normands ont ensuite fait une incursion en Aquitaine au cours de l'hiver 897-898 avant de revenir dans le Nord. Ce chapitre examine cette courte incursion en Aquitaine et ce que ces Normands ont fait à leur retour. Il examine également l'incursion possible sur la Canche jusqu'à Quentovic vers 898. En outre, l'attaque de Tours sur la Loire en 903 est explorée à partir de sources historiques, y compris Radbod, évêque d'Utrecht au début du Xe siècle. Cette razzia avait un lien très clair avec l'Irlande. Nous regardons également l'incendie du monastère breton de Landévennec en 913 et comment ces Normands se sont ensuite déplacés vers le sud-ouest de l'Angleterre, le sud du Pays de Galles et l'Irlande, d'où certains d'entre eux sont allés en Northumbrie pour combattre à Corbridge avant de capturer York en 919. Nous examinons aussi près de 1000 pièces carolingiennes contenues dans le trésor de Cuerdale trouvé sur la rivière Ribble dans l'actuel Lancashire et comment elles ont probablement été rassemblées lors d'une ou des deux incursions le long de la Loire et en Aquitaine en 897-898 et 903, et peut-être aussi à la faveur de la razzia sur Quentovic vers 898. Bien que plusieurs choses restent obscures, la période autour du tournant du siècle, environ de 896 à 919, démontre de nombreux liens réels entre les Scandinaves opérant

dans le sud et le nord de l'Angleterre, dans le nord de la France, en Bretagne, en Irlande et dans la zone de la mer d'Irlande, et bien sûr en Aquitaine.

Chapitre 12. Ce chapitre examine les activités et les connexions des Normands revenus dans la Loire et en Bretagne vers 918, semble-t-il sous la direction d'un chef nommé Ragenold (*Rögnvaldr*). Ragenold était au moins aussi important que le « fondateur » de la Normandie Rollon, avec qui il avait des relations, et sa carrière n'a jamais été étudiée. Il s'est déplacé et fait des incursions partout : en Bretagne, sur la Loire, en Poitou, au fond de l'Aquitaine jusqu'en Auvergne, en Francie (menant une partie des Normands basés à Rouen), puis en Bourgogne avant de retourner au nord et mourut sur la Seine près de Rouen vers 925. Ragenold fut également responsable de la troisième et dernière attaque contre le monastère de Fleury.

Chapitre 13. Après la mort de Ragenold sur la Seine, d'autres chefs scandinaves prirent sa place. Ce chapitre examine leurs activités sur la Loire, en Aquitaine et en Bretagne jusqu'à leur expulsion définitive de Bretagne en 939 par le prince breton Alan Barbe-Torte revenu de son exil en Angleterre en 936. L'identité possible de ces chefs appelés Incon et Felecan est également explorée ainsi que la révolte bretonne de 931.

Chapitre 14. L'apparition suivante des Normands dans la région de la Bretagne et de la Loire remonte à la fin des années 950. Elle a souvent été reliée aux Normands de Richard Ier et à la soi-disant guerre normande. Cette « guerre normande », seulement racontée de manière peu fiable par Dudon de Saint-Quentin, est explorée en détail et a certainement été exagérée si jamais elle s'est produite. Mais ce qui est clair, c'est que l'incursion à Nantes à la fin des années 950 n'a certainement pas été entreprise par les hommes de Richard Ier ni même par les hommes engagés par lui. Les responsables étaient probablement (mais sans certitude) originaires du nord de l'Angleterre, plus exactement des vikings venus de York. L'histoire des auxiliaires scandinaves que Richard a appelés pour l'aider dans les années 960 est également explorée ainsi que la manière comment, semble-t-il, certains d'entre eux sont finalement partis pour l'Espagne.

Chapitre 15. Ce chapitre explore une possible incursion en Gascogne, peut-être à la fin des années 970 ou au début des années 980. Une grande partie des témoignages provient de sources locales très tardives et discutables. Néanmoins, il y a eu des incursions dans le nord de la péninsule Ibérique de la fin des années 960 au début des années 970 et il est possible que certains de ces Normands aient effectué des incursions en Aquitaine par la suite, peut-être même dans le sud de l'Angleterre. Dans ce contexte, la bataille légendaire de Taller (dans les Landes de Gascogne) est également examinée, bien que si une telle bataille eut lieu près de l'actuel

village de Taller près de Castets, ce qui paraît très douteux, ce ne fut certainement pas en 982 comme le soutiennent de nombreux historiens antérieurs.

Chapitre 16. Le chant du cygne des Normands en Aquitaine se produisit au début du XIe siècle. Ce chapitre présente et analyse les trois principales sources de cette incursion: le *Chronicon* d'Adémar de Chabannes, les versets scaldiques de Sigvatr Þórðarson sur la première « carrière viking » d'Olaf Haraldsson appelés de nos jours les *Víkingarvísur*, et certaines des histoires de Guillaume de Jumièges dans ses *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, le tout au regard de ce que nous savons des bandes de guerriers scandinaves opérant en Angleterre, en Bretagne, sur la Seine, en Irlande et dans la péninsule Ibérique à cette époque. La conclusion est qu'il y a eu des incursions en Aquitaine durant la période de 1012 à 1013 qui n'ont toutefois probablement jamais atteint le nord de l'Espagne comme on le prétend habituellement. Les acteurs (y compris probablement le très jeune Olaf) étaient venus d'Angleterre et il y eut aussi quelques connexions très claires avec l'Irlande et la zone de la mer d'Irlande.

Enfin, il existe trois annexes très complètes. L'annexe 1 examine le point de vue d'autres historiens sur les activités scandinaves le long de la Loire et en Aquitaine dans les années 850, tandis que nous nous demandons dans l'annexe 2 s'il y a eu ou non une attaque de la Loire au nord de la Neustrie en 863. L'annexe 3 porte sur l'histoire de la fondation de l'abbaye de Maillezais en Vendée et un *Fragment des évêques de Périgueux* en s'interrogeant sur leur intérêt pour nous informer pour ce qui concerne les activités scandinaves en Aquitaine au nord de la Garonne à la fin du Xe siècle.

L'esquisse très minimaliste des chapitres présentés ci-dessus et des annexes qui suivent dans cette thèse ont nécessairement délaissé une grande partie du contenu et de l'argumentation présentés. Il faut lire ces chapitres dans leur totalité pour comprendre toute la complexité et les nuances nécessaires. Néanmoins, ce qui est clair et le deviendra d'autant plus, c'est que toutes les apparitions des Normands en Aquitaine, qui duraient parfois des années, étaient toutes liées de manière très directe – via les flottes et les chefs impliqués – à des événements qui se déroulaient ailleurs en Europe occidentale. Les Scandinaves opérant en Aquitaine à des époques différentes pendant plus de deux cents ans ne devraient en réalité jamais être qualifiés de « Vikings en Aquitaine » ou de « Vikings sur la Loire » ou similaires, sauf lorsqu'il s'agit d'une période très précise. Comme le dit Simon Coupland : « Il est (...) trompeur de parler des « Vikings de la Seine », des « Vikings de la Loire » ou même de la « Grande Armée », sauf en référence à une armée spécifique à un moment donné. »[1]

[1] S. Coupland, « The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911 », p. 195, notre traduction.

Malgré toutes les différences entre chaque cas, les Normands opérant à diverses époques en Aquitaine avaient à la fois une histoire et un avenir. Ils venaient d'ailleurs et en général, à moins d'être complètement anéantis, ils finissaient par partir ailleurs. Comme on l'a déjà dit, les références dans la littérature historiographique à des groupes tels que les « Vikings de la Loire », les « Vikings d'Aquitaine », les « Vikings de la Charente », ou même les « Vikings de Gascogne » ne tient pas compte d'une évidence pourtant assez claire, en l'occurrence que les bandes de guerre et les flottes scandinaves se déplaçaient continuellement et que leurs apparitions et leurs activités en Aquitaine et ailleurs faisaient toujours et partout partie d'itinéraires et de trajectoires plus étendus à travers l'Europe.

Nous espérons sincèrement que la présente thèse le démontre dans le cas de l'Aquitaine, ne serait-ce que partiellement, bien qu'il soit vrai que de nombreuses questions obscures, difficiles et délicates restent encore à être résolues, si jamais elles peuvent l'être. Les « Vikings en Aquitaine » ne l'étaient pas en tant que tels, ou du moins ils n'étaient pas que cela. Naturellement, ce point est aussi vrai partout ailleurs en Europe occidentale à « l'époque viking ».

En fin de compte, l'histoire des vikings en Aquitaine n'est vraiment pas différente de leur histoire dans le reste de l'Europe occidentale. Dès les premiers jours, leur objectif, à notre connaissance, semble avoir toujours été de s'enrichir par les razzias et les pillages. Cet enrichissement pouvait être obtenu en volant ou en saisissant des biens de grande valeur comme le sel (au début et peut-être même plus tard en Aquitaine), l'argent des églises et des monastères, l'or et les livres, les captifs de haut rang (évêques et nobles) qui pourraient être rachetés par la suite ou des personnes destinées à devenir leurs propres serviteurs chez eux (où que ce soit), voire des esclaves sexuelles (épouses / concubines!), ou à être vendues sur divers marchés du nord de l'Europe, de l'Irlande ou de l'Espagne musulmane, les tributs des dirigeants francs et autres, le paiement des mercenaires pour aider les rois francs ou les nobles régionaux dans leurs luttes internes ou contre d'autres Normands hostiles. Ce pillage lucratif était nécessaire pour que les chefs récompensent les propriétaires de navires indépendants qui ont formé les *lið*, sans lesquels ils n'auraient pu accomplir quoi que ce soit. Parfois, en particulier au cours des six premières décennies du IXe siècle, ces chefs, qui souvent avaient été auparavant issus de clan royaux ou de familles qui se disputaient le pouvoir, voulaient que cette richesse renforce leur capacité à retourner en Scandinavie pour contester la position « royale » d'un rival chez eux.[1]

[1] N. Lund, « The Danish Empire and the End of the Viking Age », dans P. H. Sawyer (éd.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1997), p. 156-81, à la p. 156: « Some of leaders of Viking expeditions were exiles, often members of royal families ousted from their homeland by more powerful rivals », « Certains des chefs

L'histoire de ces tentatives est variée. Mais, plus tard, de nombreux pillages et razzias en Aquitaine et ailleurs ont été menés par des chefs commandant des flottes déjà établies en dehors de la Scandinavie même – en France, en Angleterre ou en Irlande. Certes, il semble qu'à des moments différents, ces Normands autour des côtes de l'Europe occidentale aient pu recevoir des renforts périodiques de Scandinavie. De nombreux propriétaires de navires et jeunes guerriers sans réelles perspectives chez eux auraient vu le fait de se joindre aux razzias lucratives en Europe occidentale comme une proposition intéressante pour gagner de la richesse et peut-être rentrer chez eux dans une meilleure situation qu'ils ne l'avaient quittée, bien que beaucoup, sinon la plupart, ne soient jamais revenus.

Omissions et réflexions pour de futures recherches

Si la quasi-totalité des données relatives aux Normands opérant en Aquitaine et à leurs nombreuses connexions sont identifiées et discutées dans cette étude, quelques points n'ont été examinés que brièvement même s'ils concernent l'Aquitaine. Ces omissions sont uniquement dues aux contraintes de temps et à la tentative de garder un travail déjà long dans des limites raisonnables, et parce que cette étude ne prétend en aucun cas être une histoire des Normands en France et encore moins dans toute l'Europe occidentale. Ces omissions concernent plusieurs aspects dans un ordre chronologique très approximatif :

Premièrement, les activités de Pépin II d'Aquitaine à la fin des années 840 et au tout début des années 850 jusqu'à sa capture en 852, et, un peu plus tard, son éventuelle collaboration/coopération avec des Normands avant de se joindre à eux pour attaquer Poitiers en 857. C'est un sujet complexe, lié à la situation géopolitique de l'Aquitaine durant ces années, mais aucun historien n'a encore tenté une biographie de Pépin II, et la relation de Pépin avec les Normands ferait un beau sujet pour de futures recherches. Un article sur le sujet, que nous avions initialement espéré inclure dans cette thèse, est en cours de préparation.

Deuxièmement, bien que le cas de l'évêque Actard de Nantes du IXe siècle soit abordé au chapitre 4 et ailleurs, la question de sa supposée capture par les Normands et de son exil à l'étranger nécessite une réflexion plus approfondie, et ce malgré l'excellent travail initial de Pierre Bauduin sur le sujet.[1] Cela pourrait peut-être s'inscrire dans une étude sur la fréquence à

d'expéditions vikings étaient des exilés, souvent des membres de familles royales expulsés de leur patrie par des rivaux plus puissants ».

[1] P. Bauduin, « En marge des invasions vikings : Actard de Nantes et les translations d'évêques *propter infestationem paganorum* », *Le Moyen Âge*, 117 (2011), p. 9-20.

laquelle des captifs de grande valeur, tels que des évêques, étaient parfois emmenés à l'étranger avant d'être rançonnés, ou non.[1]

Troisièmement, l'implication possible de l'un des Normands actifs sur la Loire en 853, et plus particulièrement du chef Sidroc, dans l'important combat en 854 pour le contrôle futur du « Danemark » lorsque de nombreux chefs pirates opérant ailleurs le long des côtes de l'Europe occidentale sont revenus.[2] Nous espérons que notre propre opinion sur cette question sera publiée dans un prochain article provisoirement intitulé « 854 et tout ça : la lutte pour le pouvoir au Danemark ».

Quatrièmement, les allées et venues et les activités ultérieures du chef Sigfrid après avoir été mentionné pour la dernière fois à la tête des Normands sur la Charente en 865. A-t-il eu des liens avec le « roi » du même nom qui était l'un des dirigeants de la « grande armée » dans le nord de la France dans les années 880 ? Ou même avec le co-roi du Danemark en 873 aussi appelé Sigfrid ?[3]

Cinquièmement, nous pouvons noter la question de la *Légende de Saint Léon*, un évêque évangélisateur venant de Coutances dans le Cotentin, son prétendu martyre et sa décapitation à Bayonne en Gascogne souvent datés à tort d'autour de 890, bien que nous puissions douter fortement qu'ils ne se soient jamais produits.

Sixièmement, le lien supposé - direct ou indirect -, de Rollon avec le monastère de Fleury (Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire), comme cela a été suggéré de différentes manières par Dudon et Hugues de Fleury. Un article est en préparation sur cette question que nous espérons compléter et publier dans un avenir proche.

Une septième et dernière question demandant si Guillaume Longue-Épée prince des Normands de Rouen était intervenu ou non dans la répression de la révolte bretonne au début des années 930 de concert avec les Normands basés dans la région de la basse Loire.

Tout cela montre que le dossier des Scandinaves opérant en Aquitaine offre encore beaucoup de pistes de réflexion pour l'avenir. Nous espérons être en mesure d'en traiter une partie, mais,

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[1] Jean-Louis Parmentier a entamé une thèse à Caen sur la rançon sous la direction d'Alban Gautier : *Rançon et rachat des captifs dans l'Europe du nord (VIIe-XIIe siècles)*. Voir aussi J.-L. Parmentier, « Les vikings et leurs captifs Britanniques : entre violences infligées et violences fantasmées », *Criminocorpus, Revue d'Histoire de la justice, des crimes et des peines, Châtiments symboliques et imaginés, Les moyens symboliques et imaginés du châtiment* (2020), pp. 1-11.

[2] Ceci est discuté de manière très préliminaire dans S. M. Lewis, « Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark », p. 22-26, et voir aussi C. Etchingham, *Raiders, Reporters and Irish Kings*, chap 7.4, de même que le commentaire : « Sydroc/Sidric returned to the Seine in 855 or perhaps 856 - not I suspect from the Loire basin but from Denmark. ». S. Coupland, *Charles the Bald*, p. 40, dit: « Sidroc disappeared for two years [from 853 to 855], perhaps going to Ireland, or possibly returning to Denmark, where internal dissension attracted many Vikings from abroad at this time. »

[3] Certaines premières réflexions à ce sujet se trouvent dans S. M. Lewis, « Hamlet with the Princes of Denmark ».

avec un peu de chance et dans l'expectative, d'autres chercheurs souhaiteront peut-être aborder eux-aussi certaines ou toutes ces questions.

Pour conclure, bien que cette thèse ne soit probablement pas le dernier mot sur le thème des vikings en Aquitaine et de leurs connexions européennes - et nous espérons que ce n'est pas le cas -, peut-être qu'elle éclairera la discussion et le débat sur le sujet à l'avenir.

Sources and bibliography

Abbreviations

AA, SS: *Acta sanctorum*

AA, SS, OSB: Acta Sanctorum ordinis Sancti Benedicti in saeculorum classes distribute

MGH: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*

SS: *Scriptores in folio*

SRG: *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatism editi*

SRL: *Scriptores rerum langobardicarum et italicarum saec*

SRM: *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum*

PL: *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*

Other abbreviations used in footnotes for certain annals, chronicles and collections of charters are introduced at the appropriate places.

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Vikings in Aquitaine and their connections, ninth to early eleventh centuries

Abstract: The history of 'vikings' in Aquitaine encompasses, on and off, more than two centuries, from their first attested appearance and attacks on some 'islands off Aquitaine' in 799 until the early eleventh century. It is a subject that historians have only touched upon sporadically and generally in a very piecemeal fashion, and it has never hitherto been studied in any real depth. The objectives for this study were twofold. The first has been to attempt to fill the yawning historiographical gaps in terms of our understanding of the activities of the various Scandinavian groups operating in Aquitaine, from the Loire valley southwards, over the course of these two hundred years. The aim was not just to research and present some general summary, but was rather to provide to the extent possible an in-depth assessment and interpretation of which chieftains were involved, what they did and precisely when, what relationship they had with each other, and, at various times, with Frankish kings and magnates. In addition, we wanted to see if there is any real evidence for a very long-lasting, almost permanent, settlement of Scandinavians in Aquitaine, as has sometimes been suggested. The second objective of this study is to examine the different connections of the Scandinavians involved and to place them in a wider European context. It appears evident that, as elsewhere, all the groups and fleets of 'vikings' active in Aquitaine have been connected by complex links that this research attempts to explore and expose. They constantly moved around from one region of western Europe to another, as some raiding opportunities were exhausted or closed down by local defences whilst more appealing ones opened up elsewhere. These regions do not just include other territories in present-day France, but also those situated 'overseas', notably Britain, Ireland and the Irish Sea zone, the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean, as well as Frisia and Scandinavia itself.

Keywords: Vikings, Northmen, Aquitaine, Gascony, Loire, Scandinavia, Connections, Historiography

Les vikings en Aquitaine et leurs connexions, IXe-début XIe siècle

Résumé : L'histoire des vikings en Aquitaine s'étend, par intermittence, sur plus de deux siècles, depuis leur première apparition attestée et les attaques sur certaines « îles au large de l'Aquitaine » en 799 jusqu'au début du XIe siècle. Ce sujet, abordé généralement de manière très fragmentaire par les historiens, n'a jamais été approfondi. Les objectifs de cette étude étaient doubles. Le premier a été de tenter de combler les lacunes historiographiques béantes de notre compréhension des activités des différents groupes scandinaves opérant en Aquitaine, depuis la vallée de la Loire vers le sud, au cours de ces deux cents ans. Le but n'était pas seulement de rechercher et de présenter un résumé général, mais plutôt de fournir, dans la mesure du possible, une analyse et une interprétation approfondies des chefs et flottes impliqués, de leurs activités et des relations qu'ils entretenaient entre eux et, à divers moments, avec les rois et les grands du royaume franc. En outre, nous avons voulu vérifier s'il existait des preuves réelles d'une implantation très durable, presque permanente, des Scandinaves en Aquitaine, comme il a parfois été suggéré. Le deuxième objectif de cette étude est d'examiner les différentes connexions des Scandinaves impliqués et de les placer dans un contexte européen plus large. Il paraît évident que, comme ailleurs, tous les groupes et flottes de « vikings » actifs en Aquitaine ont été connectés par des liens complexes que cette recherche entend à mettre au jour. Ils se sont déplacés en permanence d'une région à une autre en Europe occidentale, lorsque les opportunités de pillage ont été restreintes par la défense locale, tandis que s'offraient ailleurs des horizons plus attrayants. Ces régions n'incluent pas seulement d'autres territoires de la France actuelle, mais aussi ceux situés « outre-mer », à savoir la Grande-Bretagne, l'Irlande et la zone de la mer d'Irlande, la péninsule Ibérique et la Méditerranée, ainsi que la Frise et la Scandinavie elle-même.

Mots-clés : Vikings, Normands, Aquitaine, Gascogne, Loire, Scandinavie, Connexions, Historiographie